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THE
BEAUTIES OF SOUTH,

CONSISTING OF
VARIOUS AND IMPORTANT

Extracts

FROM THE WORKS OF THE LEARNED AND CELEBRATED

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AND CHAPLAIN TO

THE EARL OF CLARENDON.

"IT IS THE WORK OF FANCY TO ENLARGE, AND OF JUDGMENT
TO CORRECT."

Fitzosborn's Letters;

"THE WORDS OF THE WISE ARE AS GOADS."

Eccl. xii. 12.

"THE SENSE OF THINGS, AND THE WEIGHT OF AN ARGUMENT,
GENERALLY LIES IN A SMALL COMPASS."

South.

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Reproof

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PREFACE.

THAT many authors may be abridged, to very great advantage, is a truth generally acknowledged by men of great good sense and piety.—Having sent my proposals, respecting an Abridgment of South, to the printer of the Evangelical Magazine, (a benevolent and useful publication) when, upon a visit at Nottingham, I took up the magazine for May, and, dropping upon page 205, I read the following lines: “ The saying of a
“ celebrated Divine, more remarkable for
“ the brilliancy of his wit, than the fervor
“ of his piety, has been often quoted and too
“ often credited, viz. *That the study of the*
“ *book of Revelation either found persons mad*
“ *or made them so.* * We shall be in little
“ danger of feeling an improper bias from
“ his decision, if we pay any deference to
“ the judgment of the amiable and candid
“ DODDRIDGE, who thought his (*i. e.* South’s)
“ discourses dictated by so bad a spirit, that
“ he said, *if ever any sermons were written by*
“ *the inspiration of the devil, it was Dr.*
“ *South’s.*” Circumstanced as I then was, in

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regard

* No pious, sensible man can agree to this witty but weak observation of the Doctor’s, because it contradicts Rev. i. 3.

regard to my *propofals*, I was struck, and almost confounded, as upon the first instance of a powerful electrick shock! However, when I began to recover from my surprife, I reflected seriously upon my designed abridgment, and for a moment, I hesitated upon the business. And, considering the great character of Dr. DODDRIDGE, how high he deservedly stands in the public esteem, and the importance of his remark, his singular remark respecting *South*, I think it a duty I owe to the publick, to lay before them the considerations and reasons which finally determined me to prosecute the abridgment I had taken in hand.

1st, I had read many *parts* of Dr. South with high improvement and fatisfaction.—2^{dly}, I had read several paragraphs to pious and judicious friends, who were equally charmed. Now, whatever other *acrimonious* parts were, I did not think *these* were written by the *inspiration of the devil*. For these militate directly against his kingdom and interest; Now *if satan be divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand?*—3^{dly}, I was sensible that I had not been headstrong and self-willed in the matter. I had taken prudent and wise counsel, and the design was well-approved by serious clergymen, men of superior abilities to myself, and to whom I
make

make my sincere acknowledgments for the favor they did me in reviewing several sheets of M.S. since the work has been in hand, and I with the respectable names of BRODBELT, NEWELL, PRYCE, and ENGLISH to last as long as the abridgment itself shall last.—4thly, TRUTH is certainly the same in itself, whoever may be the speaker or writer. Satan (the inspirer of *South*, according to Doddridge) spoke a great scripture truth, when he said to Jesus Christ, *He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, &c.* But, I ask, was the truth at all *injured*, because *he* spoke it? As light cannot be injured by the dunghill on which it shines, no more can *truth* be injured by the blackest lips through which it may pass. Truth is truth still. Whether Dr. South was a good man or a bad man, is not for me or any one else to determine; this I leave to the great searcher of hearts. We know that christian charity always disposes to hope the best.

In reading the whole works of this great genius, which are comprised in eleven volumes, if a man cannot discover important truths, (such as the devil *would not* inspire if he could) and striking beauties, I pity that man's want of discernment. That the Doctor was a *bigot*, a bigot of the first magnitude, and *illiberal* in a high degree, is granted. But,

is no allowance to be made for the times, the *peculiar* times † in which he lived? Did not *parties* run high, and were not the spirits of men considerably irritated? However, it is a fact, clear as the noon-day, that in these sermons, the Doctor bears a most spirited and noble testimony against the licentiousness of the age in which he lived. That he had faults is confessed, but it becomes the spirit of christianity, and the character of a christian, to cast them into shades, and to bury them in perpetual oblivion. I do not design, therefore, to bring to view any thing, either as to sentiment or expression, which may discredit the author, but from the whole of his works select whatever may tend to enrich the understanding and warm the heart.—As many of the Doctor's words are become *obsolete*, through length of time, and many of his sentences are *clumsy* in their construction, and *perplexed* in their arrangement, I have taken the liberty to correct and improve, as may serve to render the work more acceptable to the polite and ingenious part of mankind. May the divine blessing accompany this effort to advance the knowledge of divine truth, and the general improvement of men and manners.

THE EDITOR.

AYLESBURY, Nov. 1, 1795.

† The Doctor suffered more or less under the usurpation of *Oliver*.

The Beauties of South, &c.

TIME.

“**T**IME, how short! Eternity, how long!” Time is *passing* away continually. During the silent hours of night, it steals from us imperceptibly. It lessens, even *while* we are complaining of its shortness. There is nothing we can think, speak, or do, but it takes away some *time*. Our moments are gone, before we are aware. Our time is elapsed, before our designs are accomplished. “To *redeem* the time,” should be our daily task; he is the *wisest* scholar who learns it best. It was the maxim of a certain *epicure*, and in a better sense may be adopted by the true christian, Το σήμερον μελει μοι, το δ’αύριον τις οἶδε; *i. e.* I will take care for *to-day*, who knows *to-morrow*? Let the christian always embrace the *present* opportunity; and, if a man would live for ever, let him consider *to-day* as his *last*.*

* A man should be as frugal of his *time* as a *miser* is of his money; he should save it with as much care, and spend it with as much caution. Much time may be gained by good *economy*. Ceremonious visits and idle amusements are great *devourers* of time.—**READER**, have not you found it so? Beware of useless books: a man should be as careful what books he reads as what company he keeps; they both leave the same tincture upon the mind. *Pay not a moment but in purchase of its worth.*

HUMAN

HUMAN FRIENDSHIP.

When a man hath made every effort, and done all, which in the nature of things, can be done to make some certain man his *friend*; after having employed the utmost of his wit and labour, beat his brains and emptied his purse, to create an *endearment*, he may in the end, write on all these labours and attempts, VANITY! For, by them all he may be no more able to get into that person's heart, than he is to thrust his hand into a pillar of brass. The young and inexperienced imagine friends are *easily* made and secured; but when age and experience have enlarged the mind, and exposed the hardness, deceit, and ingratitude of the human heart, such persons find, that *a friend is the gift of God*: and, that he only who made hearts, can unite them. It is an expression frequent in scripture, and much more significant, than at first sight appears, namely, that *God gave such a person grace or favour in another's eyes*, as Gen. xxxix. 21, &c.

Reader, If Jesus Christ is thy friend, he will own thee in thy lowest condition, speak comfort to thee in all thy sorrows, counsel thee in all thy doubts, supply thy every want, and, in a word, *will never leave thee nor forsake thee*. This is a divine promise, here you may rest with confidence. The promises of *men*, even warm friends, are but a thin sort of diet, by which few men have ever thrived. A man may feed upon them heartily, and yet be starved to death. In a word, I may say of human promises, what expositors say of divine prophecies, *that they are never understood, 'till they come to be fulfilled*. Good looks
and

and fair speeches are cheap things : but when did good looks or fair speeches *feed* the hungry or *clothe* the naked ? These are but thin garments to keep out the cold, and but a slender repast to conjure down the rage of a craving appetite.

Proper reflections for a rich man.

What thousands and tens of thousands are there in the world, and many of these around my dwelling, whose only inheritance is misery, want, and woe ! What reason can be assigned why I should thus stand exempt from their lot ? Why should providence distinguish my person and circumstances with wealth and plenty ; make *me* to swim in pleasure when *others* sink in sorrow ? I see one man agonizing with pain, another languishing under some cruel disorder, a third dragged to prison for poverty and debt ; multitudes starving with cold and hunger, and millions condemned to perpetual slavery ! Oh how free and unmerited is the divine goodness to me ! why am I permitted to live and tread the earth ? I have transgressed against God, why am I not in hell ! why am I not bemoaning my wretched condition among them who are irretrievably undone ? My sins have deserved it, and both the mercy and justice of God, might have been glorified in my destruction. Many whose sins were never so aggravated, have long since been cut down in anger, but I am spared ! I am bound by every possible and engaging tie, by inexpressible and eternal obligations, to devote myself to God my maker.

THE

THE WORD OF GOD.

Read the word of eternal truth ; and, if ever God do thee *good* by it, thou wilt not only understand its meaning, but feel its power like a two-edged sword, dividing between thee and thy dearest lusts. It will be a fiery and a searching word indeed ; it will penetrate into thy very heart, and unbosom all thy retired corruptions. It will expose thee to thyself. It will discover to thee two great mysteries, the mystery of *iniquity*, and the mystery of *godliness*. It will, in the hand of the Spirit, mightily convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. It will discover what a bitter thing it is to transgress the divine law, and to offend against the Majesty of heaven. It will manifest the perfection of a Saviour's righteousness ; the excellent and efficacious nature of divine grace, which enables the christian to follow the Redeemer in the example of a pure conversation. It will also discover to the mind, the certainty and attendant horror of the future judgment in regard to impenitent sinners.

This word is compared to a *sword*. A just comparison ! For, as a sword has a glittering radiance to strike the eye, and an edge to pierce the flesh ; so the word, by the power and operation of the Holy Spirit, darts a convincing light into the understanding, and with an irresistible edge, enters into the very soul. Coming from God, it cuts and makes its way through the hardest heart. No arguments can resist its energy, and all pride and power must fall before it. It arraigns the irregularities *within*, and searches all the motions and affections of the soul. It clearly informs men, that *anger* is murder ; a *look* of impure desire, adultery ;

adultery ; that a man may *stab* with his tongue ; pollute himself with a *glance*, and forfeit eternity by a cast of his eye !

In the word of God we have, not only a body of *divinity*, but a system of the finest *rhetorick*. And, as the highest things demand the highest *expressions*, so we shall find nothing in scripture so sublime in itself, but it is nearly equalled by the sublimity and elegance of the *expression*. Where did majesty ever ride in superior splendor, than in those animating descriptions of the divine power, Job 28, 29, and 40th chapters ? And what triumph was ever celebrated with the fire of poetic genius equal to the song of *Moses*, Deut xxxii. Read in scripture the various *passions* of the soul ; they are there set forth in their strongest colours, and finest operations. *Love*, in all its effects, extacies, and tyrannies, is described by *Solomon*, as much above *Ovid* and *Virgil*, as the regent of day exceeds the lamp of night. *Love is strong as death, and jealousy cruel as the grave*. *Despair*, in all its inconceivable terrors, is finely set forth in Psalm lxxvii. *Sorrow*, in all its affecting pathos, is set forth in the *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, and that in strains which astonish and transport us ! One would think that every letter was wrote with a tear, every word was the sound of a breaking heart ; that the author was a man made up of sorrows ; actually disciplined to grief from his infancy ; one who never breathed but in sighs, nor spoke but in a groan !

The word of God is *The truth which is after godliness*, Tit. i. 1. Three things are comprehended in this text, viz. (1) that the gospel is simply *truth* ; (2) that it is *efficacious* truth ; and (3) that it operates

to the *best* of purposes, producing effects which are after *godliness*. As the gospel is a *truth*, it dares look its most inquisitive and penetrating adversaries in the face. The most mysterious passages in it are avouched by an *authority* it is dangerous to dispute, and by a *veracity* which never did nor ever can mistake. And truth is truth, though clothed in parables, and surrounded with darkness and obscurity; as the sun has the same inherent brightness, though wrapt in a *cloud*. Even those transcendant enigmas, the *trinity*, the *incarnation*, and the *resurrection*, they all challenge our assent upon the ground of their reality and truth. And that three is one, and one three, is altogether as *true*, as that three are three, though far from being so *plain*: and death itself is not more sure, than that men shall *rise* from the dead. Now the gospel being *truth*, sublime, unadulterated truth; it follows as a necessary consequence, that if we run through all its principles, nothing can be drawn from thence, by fair and legitimate deduction, but what is also *true*. It is impossible for truth to afford, from its own proper source, any thing but truth. Every true principle begets a consequence after its own likeness.—The gospel is *efficacious* truth; it does not terminate in notion, or rest in mere speculation. It powerfully influences the *head*, the *heart*, and the *hand*. All who know the gospel experimentally, have found it thus powerful. Saving knowledge is like an imprisoned flame, which will be sure to force its passage, and to display its brightness.—Gospel truth is not only efficacious, but efficacious to the *best* of purposes; that is, to inspire and promote *godliness*. It carries on a design for heaven and eternity. Every thing is ennobled by its *design*: and an action is of
prime

prime worth, when its object is grand and necessary. The gospel serves the two greatest interests which men can name or angels conceive, *i. e.* the glory of the Creator, and the salvation of the creature. Well may it be called, **THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD.** Oh! sinner, believe its happy tidings, confide in its free promises. It is lamentable to consider, how the great God hath been dishonored, and poor souls have been murdered, by assertions contrary to this truth, this word of truth! By smooth orations upon what is called moral *virtue*, they have been betrayed into a *false confidence* respecting their state; which confidence hath eventually deceived them, and let them fall without remedy into the bottomless gulph of perdition!—God rebuke and amend such pernicious impostors.

The great ennobling characteristic of the gospel, is *truth*; truth eminently and transcendently *such*; and for that cause, by a distinguishing excellency, called “**THE TRUTH:**” from whence, by irrefragable consequence, it must follow, that whatsoever is *not* truth, can be no part of christian religion. A bottom so firm and sure upon which christianity rests, that it cannot be placed upon a surer foundation. And, besides, there is this farther advantage accruing to it thereby, that as truth and goodness, by an eternal, indissoluble union, (as strong as nature, or rather as the God of nature can make it) stand inseparably combined, and even identified with one another; so upon the same account, we may be assured, that the *goodness* of the gospel must be adequate to the *truth* of it. Both of them being commensurate, both of them properties of it, included in it, and flowing from it. So that the gospel being thus held forth to the world,

as a most lively representation of those two perfections of the divine nature, namely, its truth and goodness ; it must needs by the first of them, recommend itself to our *understanding*, as the most commanding object of our *esteem* ; and by the other, to our *will*, as the most endearing object of our *choice*. The gospel is the word of one, whose infinite knowledge makes it impossible that he should *be deceived*, and whose infinite goodness makes it equally impossible that he should *deceive*.—Reader, believe and obey.

HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

and the superiority of that which is divine.

The knowledge of man upon its greatest improvements, is vastly deficient, and mixed with great darkness ; and all his labour, and all the travel of his soul, in the pursuit of science, is insufficient to expel *that* darkness which he brought with him into the world. Spiritual knowledge is the glory of the rational nature : in comparison with this, the boasted wisdom of men is folly. This is life eternal, to know the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Whereas ignorance is the fore-runner, and the certain prelude to eternal *death*. This is the *condemnation*, that light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light. Eternal life should be a *motive* to stimulate our utmost exertions to obtain the knowledge of God, as our covenant God in Christ. Consider this, you that are ignorant of God, ignorant in the midst of teaching ordinances. Oh ! how dreadful is it, to enjoy precious means of knowledge, and yet only to be proficient in ignorance !

THE

THE FALL OF MAN,
and its unhappy consequences.

From the beginning of the world to this day, there hath been no considerable villany acted, but it hath been in the strength of some great *fallacy* put upon the mind by a false representation of evil for good or good for evil. “ In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,” says God to *Adam*; and so long as *Adam* *believed* this, he did not eat. But, says *Satan*, in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt become as God in knowledge and happiness. Upon this misstatement and *false* representation of the matter, he took of the fruit, and ate mortality, misery, and death!!! Himself and his whole posterity became involved in one awful scene of wretchedness! Now, can there be a woe or a curse in all the magazines of vengeance, equal to the iniquity of designed misrepresentation; the calling *evil good and good evil*? of which one single instance could involve all mankind, past, present, and to come, in one universal and dreadful confusion!

The condition of fallen man is truly deplorable. His circumstances are now such, that he carries his plague about him, and wears it much nearer to him than the coat upon his back. He encloses a viper in his very bowels. He feeds and maintains, and is passionately fond of his mortal enemy, *sin*; and, what adds to his wretchedness, he has it not properly in his *own* power to be otherwise. He has a body, which is not so much the instrument, or servant, as the *dungeon* of his soul; and, sin holds him in bonds, so strong, and which are in their nature, so suited to his

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corrupt

corrupt inclinations, that he mistakes his ruin for his interest ; and nothing gratifies his passions, or engages his affections, but that which *dishonours* his maker and most certainly *destroys* himself ! * — The soul has originally and in itself an aversion to duty. That horrid *proneness* of man's will to all manner of *vice*, that inundation of lewdness, which, with such an

* Our whole life is a standing testimony to the *corrupt state* of human nature. Our life is a chequered scene of weakness, vanity and sin. Now, is not the *nature* of the tree, clearly manifested by the *fruit* it produces ? We do not only depart from God *occasionally*, or once in a way, but we are prone, *naturally prone* to depart from him, and to sin against him. As soon as it appears we are *reasonable* creatures, yea sooner, it appears that we are *sinful* creatures. Sin in the heart is like *ivy* in the wall, clear it away with the greatest assiduity, there will yet be *some* sproutings, 'till the wall is actually taken down. The power of *inbred sin* appears in its *resistance* to such grand and affecting *motives* to obedience which God has set forth in his word. Now, if good offices and acts of kindness do not kindle returns of gratitude in the heart, the greater these acts of kindness are, the stronger must be that *insensibility* which resists their influence. God requires us to love *him* supremely ; but the native bent of our hearts is to love *ourselves* supremely. God commands us to live *to him* ultimately ; but there is a strong propensity in our hearts to live *to ourselves* ultimately. God demands, and justly demands, of his creatures, that they should *delight in him* superlatively ; whereas the native bias of our hearts is to delight in *some worldly good*, and in that wholly. If this be not a demonstrable proof that we are very far gone from original righteousness, the shining of the sun is no proof that it is a body of light. This humbling doctrine should excite in us a spirit of watchfulness and prayer. We are in perpetual danger of falling into some *actual* sin. We have to encounter, not only an enemy without, but a far more dangerous one *within*. Satan, our determined adversary, sees which are our prevailing lusts, and suits his temptation accordingly ; and, when sin and Satan unite their efforts against the believer, it is a difficult thing to stand. How attentive then, oh ! how attentive should we be to our own heart, lest at any time we should be ensnared and drawn aside from the paths of truth and virtue. We should never remit our *watch*, because we are *always in danger* !

uncontrolled

uncontrolled predominance, has spread itself over the whole world, it is a sad but certain demonstration of this truth, this fatal truth. What mean all those hard restraints and shackles which are imposed upon us in our *minority*? What mean those severe methods of discipline, and all the maxims of education? Are they not designed as so many banks raised up to confine that sea of impurity, which rages and swells within our hearts, in as narrow bounds as possible? Were it not for these wholesome restraints would not the pride and vanity, the lust and passion of human nature, pour itself out in actual enormities upon every occasion?—All who have seen and considered human nature in its true light have observed, what a strange conflict there is in the soul of man, when clear truths meet with strong corruptions; a disposition of mind to embrace a doctrine because evidently *true*; another disposition arising and opposing it because unpleasant and *disagreeable*; *i. e.* disagreeable to corrupt nature. *Purity of heart; poverty of spirit; chastity of mind, &c.* are divine and excellent precepts. Then why are they so rejected in the world? Is it because men judge them *not true*? By no means, but because they are severe and grating truths. They *believe* them, but they cannot *love* them, and for that very reason they reject them; not because they do not convince their minds, but because they cross their inclinations. Men will sometimes *hear* the mortifying truths of christianity; but then they listen to them as they listen to the sad story of a *deceased* relative, or a *lost estate*; they are *true*, but at the same time they are *troublesome*. When men reject *truth*, that they may indulge *sin*, they sacrifice the glory of their nature and their reason to a brutish disposition, and make their noblest per-

fections bow down to their basest lusts! This was the case with *Herod*, who struck off the *Baptist's* head, only to reward the dances of a strumpet. Men *see* the light but *love* darkness; acknowledge the truth of a doctrine, but abhor its strictness.

GOD, in his being, perfections, &c.

God is an infinite being, without bounds to his *essence*, wonderful in his actions, inconceivable in his purposes, and inexpressible in his attributes. He is infinitely more than another world in himself; too high for our speculations, and too majestic for our descriptions. How can such vast perfections, or, suitable and just ideas of them, be crowded into the mind of *man*? a little finite understanding! How can the King of Heaven enter by such contracted doors? by a weak imagination, a slender notion, a darkened intellect! How shall faculties so mean, so deficient, measure the lengths of his *eternity*, the breadths of his *immensity*, the heights of his *prescience*, and the depths of his *decrees*? Who can search out or comprehend the manner of his existence, as the *triune* Jehovah; or explain the mystery of the *incarnation*? And these are some of the prime, the fundamental principles of our holy religion. It is the prerogative of his essence, not only to surpass the ken of sense, but also to nonplus the most accurate and sagacious investigation of our reasoning powers. He laughs at the bold attempts of our understanding, in labouring to comprehend him! By his excessive brightness he over-powers the eye of the soul: he is like the sun in his noon-tide splendors, too visible to be seen; and, it is certain, what we cannot conceive with clearness, we never
can

can express with precision. Nothing but an infinite knowledge can comprehend an infinite being. We may as well endeavour to take up the ocean in the hollow of our hands, or clasp the heavens in our arms, as to understand or fathom the immense perfections of the divine nature.

SIN.

As it is difficult to view the nature of a thing in itself, let men read the nature of sin in the history of its dreadful and destructive *consequences*. See the ruin of an whole species in the fall of one man! Behold *Adam* charged with guilt and hurled out of Paradise: debased in his nature, and cursed to perpetual toil and misery; and all that toil and misery entailed upon his wretched offspring to the end of days. Behold the *deluge* breaking in upon the earth, and the whole world lying under the destroying element! *Sin* was the procuring cause. *Sin* opened the sluices of heaven, and broke up the fountains of the great deep. *Sin* provoked the Almighty to unravel the work of a whole creation, and to deface in anger the admirable draughts of his own hand! Read the captivities, dispersions and massacres of the Israelites, and you will read so many comments upon *sin*, so many lively descriptions of the aggravated and destructive nature of guilt. But he who would bring the matter to a compendium, and as it were see all in one, let him behold THE SON OF GOD BLEEDING UPON THE CROSS.

Let a man reflect and say, (when he is collected and retired,) shall I, by presuming to sin, affront the omnipotent Creator of the universe! that great Being

who can instantly crush me to nothing ; or, what is worse, frown me into hell ! Shall I, as in cases which have frequently occurred, fear the anger of a *man*, which lasts but for a moment, and can do but little while it lasts ? and, shall I venture to provoke such a displeasure, at which the very angels tremble ; a displeasure which, in its duration, is *eternal*, and, in its weight, *intolerable* !

Some men talk about small sins by way of extenuating their guilt : but it must be remembered, that there is no sin so little, but is actually great enough to dishonour an infinite God, and to ruin an immortal soul. Leave sin to its own course, and however small it may seem at first, it will soon become great ; every lustful thought will become *adultery* ; every angry thought will rise to *murder* ; every murmur will terminate in *curfing* ; and every discontented thought will ripen into *blasphemy*. Were it not for the sanctifying grace, or the restraining power and providence of God, sin would prevail and abound *much more* than now it does. Let no man therefore judge of the smallness of his danger by, what he apprehends, the smallness of his sins ; for, the smaller the sin, the deeper may be the satanic stratagem. Few consider how *many ways* a soul may be ruined : those who do, will not account it a foolish scrupulosity for a man to *beware of the least sin*, and the most slender instrument which will promote our ruin. No scrupulosity about matters of *eternal* consequence can be either absurd or superfluous.—Sin, like the heart which harbours it, is the *primum vivens*, and the *ultimum moriens*. Sin is so passionately regarded, that every unregenerate man cleaves to it as his best beloved, and will even live and die with it, which (as
every

every one knows) is the highest demonstration of regard. In Job xv. 16, the wicked are said to *drink iniquity* like water. No appetite so strong as that of thirst. Hence, as it is the distinguishing characteristic of the godly, that they thirst *after righteousness*, so it is of the wicked, that they thirst *after iniquity*. The ungodly quench their present desire of sin by actually committing it, as man does his thirst, *i. e.* with vehemence and delight. *Sin* is so much loved by the carnal heart, that (according to scripture representation) it is to him as a right eye, and a right hand. Sin, wherever it has the ascendancy (and that is in every *natural* man) reigns over and enslaves the affections, and so keeps a man in perpetual bondage. He is, to all intents and purposes, tied and bound with the chains of his sin; he presses the chain to his heart, and love (as is usual with that passion) *blinds* him to all sense of his enslaved and humiliating condition. His mind is fully set upon sin, and all his powers and faculties are exerted and employed in the prosecution of sinful purposes and desires. To many, it may seem strange, but it is a certain fact, that *sin* bears date with our very being; and, indeed, in a sense, prevents it. We were, if the expression may be admitted, sinners before we were born. We seem to have been held in the womb, not only as infants for the birth, but as malefactors in a *prison*. And, if we look upon our interests and concerns in the present world, it must be acknowledged that our forfeiture was much earlier than our possession. "We are, says an Apostle, "BY NATURE children of wrath," Eph. ii. Not made so merely by imitation, custom, or ill-contracted habits, but *by nature*, the first principle and source of action. And nature we know, is as entire, though

not so strong, in an *infant* as in a grown man. Indeed, I conceive that the strength of natural corruption is so great, that we may venture to say, every man is born an adult sinner. For *sin* is the only thing in the world which never had any infancy, that knew no minority. *Tantillus puer, tantus peccator*, says *St. Austin*. Could we view things *in semine*, and look through principles, what a nest of impurities should we discover in the heart of the youngest infant! somewhat like a knot of little vipers, or snakes in a dung-hill. We should behold in all the faculties of nature, a radical power of sin, that may in future, discover itself in a thousand bitter productions. Age and a maturity of years does not give *being*, but only *opportunity* to sin. That corrupt principle which lay dormant before, is then drawn forth into sinful *acts*. When a man is grown up, his corrupt nature does not *begin* to exist, but to appear, and to spend upon that stock which it had possessed long before.

Pelagius indeed maintains, that the sons of Adam come to be sinners, not by any inherent or derived corruption, but merely by imitation. But then, I ask, what are those *inclinations* which *dispose* us to such bad imitations? Certainly that must be sinful, which so powerfully *inclines* us to sin. Sin is *sin*, whether it rests unobserved in the inclinations, or shoots out and appears in *practice*. A toad is as certainly full of *poison*, though it never spits it. Men generally look only to the *outward* conduct, and leave the *heart* unexplored: as a *sepulchre* is admired, more for its outside than for its contents. Hence the necessity for *inward* purification. For, it is the *pure in heart*, and such only who shall see God. Reader, you must see and feel your disorder, that you may apply to Jesus Christ

Christ the divine physician, for a remedy. Where there is no conviction there will be no cure.

Whoever has a spiritual sense, or a proper apprehension of the *evil* there is in *sin*, knows the terror of the law, and the dreadful nature of the curse denounced against the children of disobedience. What it is to live under its tremendous sentence; perhaps, expecting every day, every hour, every minute, its fearful execution! It is a painful reflection, that any man should be in a condition from which he is not able to extricate himself, and in which, if he remains, he is infallibly ruined. And yet this is the state of man by nature, considered as a fallen, wretched, helpless creature; he is born in sin, and the wages of sin is death; death in all its latitude, including all its fearful harbingers. A convinced sinner trembles under the apprehensions of deserved wrath. His heart fails him; his spirit sinks within him. But a single ray of hope supports his fainting mind, arising from this consideration, that the hands of mercy are not tied, nor the bowels of divine goodness shut up against sinners. There is mercy with the Lord that he may be feared, and that lost sinners may be saved. Now, if any man may be said to work out his own salvation with *fear* and *trembling*, this must be the man. This man knows to his sorrow, that corrupt nature has treasured up fuel enough in his breast, for the wrath of God to feed upon for ever: between which and himself nothing can interpose but free grace and divine compassion; both which are above and beyond the claim of any sinner under heaven. And, those persons whose eyes have never yet been open to see their real state as sinners, but have hitherto passed their days in a foolish and blind confidence, are not yet arrived to that

that true poverty of spirit, unto which every one must come, who shall eventually enter into the kingdom of heaven. Indeed, it would be but salvation and redemption thrown away, for Christ Jesus to save any who are not convinced they are ruined without him.

MENTAL BLINDNESS.

The effects of *natural* blindness are painful and distressing ; but the effects of *spiritual* blindness are much more injurious and fatal. Life and death, good and evil, come alike to him who is spiritually blind : as all things are of the same colour to him who cannot see. His whole soul is nothing but night, darkness and indistinction. He can neither see the way to happiness, or that to misery. How then should he pursue the one or avoid the other. Where there is no *sense* of things there can be no *distinction*, and where there is no distinction there can be no choice. That which brings darkness upon the soul is *sin*. And, as to the present condition of human nature, the soul is not so closely united to the body, as is *sin* to the soul. In a word, there is a set combination of all without a man, and all within him ; of all above ground and all under it, (if hell be so) first to put out his eyes, and then to drive him headlong into perdition. Oh ! then, how necessary is the admonition of our blessed Lord, *Take heed, lest the light which is in thee be darkness !*

The Genius and Benefits of Christianity.

Christianity is the last and noblest revelation which God has made of his mind and will to the sons of men. Its direct tendency is to promote sobriety,
humanity,

humanity, and goodwill to men. It provides most effectually against *every species of violence and cruelty*. It always recommends patience and forbearance, in preference to the most just and reasonable pretensions to revenge. It condemns, in the severest terms, every hard thought, angry passion, and provoking word. I conclude, therefore, that the man, who not only makes a *profession*, but does indeed possess christianity, will be a man of *peace*. The very design of Jesus Christ in the redemption of man was, not only glorification as an end, but sanctification as a *meetness* for that end. To make holy and to make happy was the great design of our most blessed Redeemer, in leaving his Father's bosom and cloathing himself with the infirmities of our nature. This disposed him to submit to all the indignities of an obscure birth, an indigent life, and an ignominious death! All the long and miraculous scene of transactions relating to Jesus Christ, was to redeem and recover perishing men from their darling sins; to liberate them from the tyranny of ruling corruptions; to dispossess the usurper: to introduce the kingdom of God into their very heart; to free every faculty of the soul, and in this way to restore men to God.

The doctrines of christianity, give the best account of the nature of God and of man; of the first introduction of sin into our world, and of its effectual cure and remedy; of the way and manner in which the blessed God sees meet to deal with mankind; the manner of divine worship, and his methods of future retribution: and this is that circle of knowledge necessary and (when genuine, *i. e.* by the teaching of the Holy Ghost) sufficient to make men, what they wish to be, *happy*. And which, if it be sought
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for any where, but in the gospel revelation, it is like seeking for the living among the dead; or the expectation of a vintage from a field of thistles. All, which the *philosophers* teach about these things, is either falsity, or conjecture; and so tends either to make men *sinful*, or at best, to leave them *unsatisfied*.—Sin is destroyed by the Son of God as our *priest*. 1st, By the satisfaction which he paid down for it; by this he destroys and does away the *guilt* of it. 2dly, By that supply of *grace* which he obtained for the believer, whereby he might be enabled to conflict with and overcome it; by this the *power* of sin is destroyed. Thus we see that Jesus Christ, when he was apparently in his lowest condition, bleeding upon the cross as a malefactor, even *then* he broke the chief support of the devil's kingdom, and triumphed over his strongest principality, in cancelling guilt and loosing the bands of sin by a *full expiation*. Oh! the astonishing efficacy of this expiation! *Sin*, which has so much venom in it as to poison a whole creation, to kindle an eternal fire, and to overturn and confound the whole universe; and yet, being atoned by the blood of Christ, is become in regard to every believer, as a lion without teeth, or a serpent without a sting. But, none could thus reduce its power but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and our eternal high priest. The sufficiency of his ransom will create matter for everlasting astonishment and praise. It is this which should comfort every christian when he comes to lie upon a death-bed, and is about to take his long sleep. He should consider that he has every reason to expect that he shall rise again. If omnipotence can awaken him; if Jesus Christ can snap asunder the bonds of death, and if the word of the King of kings can give him assurance. Our blessed Redeemer has fully accomplished the work
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for which he was manifested. He has vanquished the devil, beat down all his forts, frustrated his deep-laid stratagems; and so having delivered his elect, in spite of all delusion, sin, and death; as a king and a conqueror, he is everlastingly exalted at the right hand of the Most High, ever living to make intercession for us, and to receive the joint adoration of saints and angels for evermore.

Even in this world, the doctrines of christianity impart and communicate much of heaven to real believers; giving them the first fruits of glory, in the justification and sanctification of their persons. And, we may add to this, the high privilege of *adoption*, by which they are reinstated in all those rights which they had forfeited by sin. Thus believers come to have a *new* claim to all which they *enjoy* here upon earth, as well as all for which they *hope* in the world to come. To the *saints*, even temporal blessings descend by virtue of a covenant relation to God as *their Father*; while other men receive them only as the bounties of a liberal and common providence. Every affliction and trial, when sanctified, serves to convey important lessons of instruction to the devout and considering mind. Under exercises of this kind, the believer learns the vanity of every sublunary enjoyment, and is thereby admonished to watchfulness and prayer. The man who strives to improve temporal calamities to a spiritual advantage, coincides with the divine method; and reaps an harvest where other men lose their hopes.

Hath God thought fit, in his all-wise providence, to cast thy lot among the *poor*, either by denying to thee a share of worldly property, or by greatly diminishing the same? The doctrines of christianity will,
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in a measure, explain the mystery, and shew thee that all this may be but the proper effects of *preventing mercy*. For, so much mischief as *riches* have done, and may do the souls of men, so much mercy may there be in taking them away. Are not riches frequently kept for the owners, to their present and eternal injury? Do not riches make the narrow way much narrower? and really contract the gate which leads to life, even to the straitness of a *needle's eye*? Now if God suit the narrowness of thy circumstances to the narrowness of the way thou art to pass, is there any thing but mercy in all this? Nay, are not the riches of his mercy conspicuous in the poverty of thy condition? A *father's* attention and care may be seen in all. Oh! then *believer*, learn to be content with such things as are kindly bestowed, knowing that he hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.*

The divinity and compassion of Jesus Christ.

It is said, in Heb. ii. 16. That Jesus Christ *took*, ἐπαρβάνεταί, assumed, or *took on him, the seed of Abraham*. Whence the proper divinity of Jesus Christ unavoidably follows. For, if Jesus Christ took upon him the seed of Abraham, or the human nature, then he certainly had a being antecedent to his taking upon him that nature. The consequence is proved thus: every *action* proceeds from some being or nature which *does exist*; but to *assume* the human nature is an action, and that (of course) not the action of the nature *assumed*; therefore, it must be the action of some nature that *did exist before*; and that was the divine nature. His condescension in this matter discovers

covers the tender compassion of his heart. Christ saw our ruin by the fall, and stepped forth for our help, and rescued our lives at the expence of his own! Oh! what transports of gratitude should fire the human mind! This was compassion worthy of the Son of God. Let our gratitude rise into admiration, and our admiration into everlasting astonishment! Ye angels tell me, tell me ye first-born sons of light, why should the Son of God disrobe himself of his eternal excellencies, to come down to earth and wrap himself in dust and ashes; to converse with weakness and mortality, with vile creatures and viler sinners? Say, ye astonished heavens, all this to pluck some wretched smarting fire-brands from the flames of hell; where, otherwise, they must have lain consuming, but not consumed, *for ever*. Be lost, oh! my soul, be lost in wonder, love and praise. With *this* reflection, and under *these* impressions, can any man sin? sure, it cannot be. Oh! let us ever remember, that Christ *so* redeems us from wrath, that he will *first* redeem us from our lusts and vain conversation. Oh! let us never forget, that by this stupendous incarnation of the divine nature, he made himself the *son of man*, that by the change of our nature, we might become the *sons of God*.

From the covenant of redemption, there results a two-fold relation of Christ to his people. He is, first, a *mystical* head, and they are his members; thus circumstanced and thus related, they (his people) may be considered as legally suffering, when Christ suffered. He is, secondly, a *surety*; so that the satisfaction made for them by Jesus Christ in law estimation, is accepted as paid down in and by their own persons. So that in Jesus Christ they (*i. e.* all true believers)

believers) obtain a free *discharge*, a perfect justification, and complete *salvation*. Blessed be God for such a wise and effectual method of recovery for ruined sinners!—For my part, I cannot look upon any one thing (whatever others may do) as a more *fundamental* article of the christian religion, than CHRIST'S SATISFACTION FOR SIN. It is by *this*, and this only, that any one of the lost sons of Adam, either is or can be reconciled to God. *

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

There is an arrow that flies by night as well as by day, and God is the person who shoots it. He can take an exact aim, as well in the dark as in the light. Things are not left to hover in *uncertainty*, whether they shall or shall not come to pass. The whole train of events is laid beforehand, and all circumstances and things proceed by the rule and limit of an antecedent decree. Let me ask who could manage the affairs of the universe, if every event fell out at *random*? With the great God there can be no contingent

* CHRIST *dying for our sins*, is not only declared to be a divine truth, a truth according with the scriptures; but a truth of such *importance*, that the present standing and final salvation of the Corinthians are suspended upon their adherence to it. See 1 Cor. xv. 1, 2, 3. In fine, the doctrine of the *cross* is the central point in which all the lines of evangelical truth meet and are united. What the sun is to the system of nature, that the doctrine of the cross is to the gospel system. It is the life of it. The revolving planets might as well exist and keep their course, without the attracting influence of the one, as for a *gospel* to be exhibited, that should leave out the other.—The apostle declares that by him, Jesus Christ, we have received the *atonement*. But, if Jesus Christ made no atonement, as *some* say, then no atonement can be received. However, I will abide by the *apostle*.

circumstance

circumstance whatever. It cannot be denied, but by the most shameless effrontery, That "He, God, worketh all things (in nature, providence and grace) according to the counsel of his own will."

Though *sinful* actions belong entirely to men, as fallen sinful creatures, yet even *these* are over-ruled by an all-wise and omnipotent superintendence to a certain issue. The most horrid villany that ever transpired in this world, *i. e.* the crucifixion of Christ, was by no means a matter of *chance*; but agreed, in every circumstance of it, to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. See Acts ii. 23. Wise men act with *design*. The builder first lays his *plan*; and the pilot determines his port. Now, is not the blessed God *wise* to design, and *powerful* to execute? and, is it rational to suppose he can, at any time, or in any thing, be frustrated in his counsels, or disappointed* in his aim? Let reason make the reply. God is the *first agent*; and his influence must set the vast machine of the universe in motion: and whatever he does in time, he must *will* to do before he does it; and what he wills and intends once, he willed and intended from everlasting. It being unphilosophical and irrational, to suppose any new immanent act in God.

God executes necessarily what he purposed freely. When providence designs judgment or destruction to a tyrannical and ungodly prince, nobody knows by what little, unusual, unregarded means the blow shall reach him. If *Ahab* be doomed to fall, a private soldier shall draw a bow at a *venture*, but the sure directions of providence shall convey the arrow in a direct line to Ahab's heart, and there lodge the re-

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venge

venge of heaven ! God has many ways to reap down the proud and ungodly grandees of the earth. And, when no bullet or sword is to be feared, he may abandon a great personage to a bold self-conceited physician, worse by far than his present distemper, who shall dose, and bleed, and kill him *secundum artem*, and make a shift to cure him into his grave.—May not every *soldier*, who comes alive from the wars, pass for a living monument of a benign providence ? Was he not in the very neighbourhood of *death* ? Might not the bullet which rased his *cheek*, as easily have gone through his *head* ? And the sword which glanced upon his *arm*, by a small diversion have penetrated his *heart*. The workings of providence in our preservation are truly marvellous. Present health and prosperity are both very *uncertain*. The sun shines in its brightest splendor but the very moment before it passes under a *cloud*. Who knows what a day, what an hour may bring forth ? He who builds upon the *present*, builds upon the narrow compass of a point : and where the foundation is so *narrow*, the superstructure cannot in the nature of things, be high and strong too. People forget how little it is which they know, and how much less it is which they can do, when they build with confidence upon any *present* state of things.

God governs and controls the secret designs of men. He superintends their different purposes, and directs and determines them to very different ends to what men first intended. Men may resolve, but God often blows upon, and so frustrates all their counsels. In vain do the *Syrians* take counsel to invade *Judah*, when God declares “ it shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass,” as in Isa. vii. To turn a river in its
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most rapid course, into a contrary direction, discovers no ordinary skill. When a sinner, in the full career of his intentions, is rushing into sin, like a horse into the battle, then for God, by an unseen hand, to control and direct his course, * and by that very man to accomplish *his own* purposes, argues a wisdom beyond the comprehension of man! How *private* were Joseph's brethren in concerting their wicked and malicious schemes to ruin him; yet God observes their villany, and the methods which they pursue to undo him, God overruled for his exaltation and their own preservation. See Gen. xlv. 5. Thus *Judas* laid his plan, and, in secret, concerted with the Jewish rulers to betray his master. God saw his design, and managed it so as to accomplish the most glorious *end* that ever was accomplished, and which men and angels will celebrate in hymns of triumphant joy for ever and ever! God's knowledge and power are most excellent; he manages the world and all men in it according to his pleasure. The sinner shoots the arrow, but God takes the aim, and directs it to his own mark. Let a man strive to sin as secretly as he possibly can, yet he cannot escape the notice of a sin-avenging God; and if his providence does not expose him, yet his justice will repay him.

Offices of Jesus Christ.

To be a disciple of Christ, is to accept of, and to have an interest in him as he is offered and proposed in the gospel. Now Jesus Christ is proposed and held

* As in the case of *Col. Gardiner*, related by the excellent *Dr. Doddridge*, in his life of the Colonel; *an interesting piece of biography.*

forth, to every particular person who expects salvation by him, under three distinct offices; *prophetical, kingly, and sacerdotal*. In this account, I give you, not only the *number* of his offices, but also their *order* in relation to us. Now this order is founded upon the very nature of things. For, in the nature of things there must be 1st, the knowledge of duty, 2dly, the performance, and 3dly, the reward. In which Jesus Christ is all in all. In his *prophetical* capacity, he reveals and makes *known* to us the will of God. In his *kingly* office, he rules in our hearts, and governs us as his subjects; in this way we yield obedience to his will. And then, in his priestly *capacity*, we receive the fruit of that obedience of faith and love, in our justification and salvation. We must not think that our obedience is rewarded with eternal life, for any *merit* in that; no, but it is the merit of Christ's sacrifice that procures this reward to our obedience. This reward is perfectly free to the redeemed, though dearly purchased by the Redeemer. Sustaining these offices, our most blessed Mediator is every way sufficient. May we love him and cleave to him for evermore.

BENEVOLENCE & CONTRIBUTION.

God sometimes, in the way of his providence, calls upon thee, O man, to relieve the necessities of thy brother, to support his blessed cause in the world; and at other times to attend to the wants of thy country in one form or another. Now, before thou hast recourse to the old stale pretence, that it is *out of thy power*, consider with thyself, that there is a God, who will never be put off with pretences and falshood,
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he knows exactly what thou canst do, and what thou canst not. And, consider, in the next place, that it is not the best husbandry in the world to be damned to save charges. The *miser* (and many such there are) who yet wishes to be thought otherwise, is a pest and a monster; and it is a query whether his heart is *harder* or his hand the *closer*. He is greedier than the *sea*, and more barren than the *shore*. A scandal to religion, and an exception from common humanity; and upon no other account fit to live in this world, but to be made an example of God's justice in the next. Rich men are sometimes outwardly esteemed and honoured, while the *methods* which they pursued to become rich are inwardly abhorred and detested. Generosity and compassion will always command respect, while oppression and avarice will be deservedly branded all the world over. When a flourishing *oppressor* shines in gold, the *basest* thing lies hid under the richest covering.

INGRATITUDE.

Ingratitude! thou ungrateful brute, thou blemish to mankind, and reproach to thy creation; what shall we say of thee, or to what shall we compare thee? For thou art an exception from all the visible world; neither the heavens above, nor the earth beneath, afford any thing like thee! If thou wouldst find thy parallel, go to *hell*, which is both the region and emblem of ingratitude. For besides thyself, there is nothing but hell, which is always *receiving* and never *restoring*.

MULTUM IN PARVO.

The scripture vouches *Solomon* for the wisest of men, and his *proverbs* prove him to be so. The seven wise men of Greece, so famous all the world over, acquired that fame (each one of them) by a single and brief sentence. And, ἔτι σελύον still lives and flourishes, while many *huge volumes* are sunk in utter oblivion. The reason of things lies in a small compass. Most of the writings in this world are little more than illustration and rhetoric, which signifies as much as nothing to a mind eager in pursuit after the causes and philosophical truth of things. *

HYPOCRISY.

King *Herod* did many things in his day, of great public utility, but yet he did not deserve the reputation of a public spirit; for his sole design was to promote his *own* honour, and the gratification of his ambition. This may serve to explain the complex and mysterious nature of many actions which are specious in themselves, and highly commended among men. The *action* may be a public good, a national advantage, and yet the *motive* be ambition or avarice. It is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, for men to see through the covering; but God looks upon and looks through the *heart*. One who possesses a genuine

* N. B. The *Editor* esteems this paragraph as a fine apology for the present abridgment of the *Author's* discourses: The eleven volumes of which doubtless contain no small portion of mere *illustration and rhetoric*.

regard to the Lord Jesus Christ, prefers *him* to every earthly enjoyment. For a man to pretend affection to Jesus Christ, by extolling his person, admiring what he has done for us; praising all his ways, and loudly commending both the practice and the practitioners of *godliness*; and yet, at the same time, act wholly for the world, live in sin, and upon all occasions submit to a temptation, rather than combat with it, is to proclaim his *hypocrisy* as upon the house top. Notwithstanding this clashing of inclination and interest, I suppose every reasonable person would judge of the man, not by his words but by his actions. *Laudant illa, sed ista legunt*, he who commends such and such books, but is always reading others, only shews that he praises one thing, but *prefers* another; and that the best interpreter of his mind, is, not his discourse but his choice; not what he says but what he does. That love which fires the *heart* will influence the hand. Where there is an inward spring there will be an external motion. When we have once placed our affection upon a person, the next thing is what shall we *do* for him. Divine objects may *refine*, but they do not abate the *vigour* of our affections. Many please themselves with their fair professions, orthodox opinions, and their moral conduct; and yet there may be *no love*. It is the *command* must try that. And, indeed, the grand concern is, not so much what we have thought of, or what we have said for Christ, but what we have *done* for him. *If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them*. Christ Jesus is our Lord and Master, and a servant's love to his master is best proved by his diligence and faithfulness in his service. *If ye love me*, says he, *keep my commandments*. Love to Christ, enables a man to act for him in opposition to all other

things, and this is the infallible test of true affection. In many instances *our own* interest is so blended with the interest of Christ, that we may too easily impose upon ourselves, and imagine we are pursuing and promoting the interest of Jesus Christ, when indeed we are *only* seeking and serving our own. No doubt *Jehu* persuaded himself that in every exertion he made, he was doubtless serving God, and promoting his glory, whereas *self* was at the bottom of all he did. *Judas* served Jesus Christ in *his way*, and his way was to serve *himself* by him. *Is there not many a sacerdotal Judas now?*

In Job viii. 14. We find the hope of the hypocrite compared to a *spider's web*. A similitude of great elegance and propriety. The spider's web is wrought with the most subtle *art* imaginable. So the hypocrite spins his hope with an art hardly to be conceived. This good thought, that good word, and the other good work, are curiously interwoven to make a covering for his hypocrisy. And, as the spider draws all her flimsy threads from her own bowels, so the hypocrite weaves all his confidence out of his own inventions and imaginations. The spider's web and the hypocrite's hope agree in point of *weakness*; both are too fine-spun to last long. How easily is the web dislodged and swept away for ever! The hypocrite may hang his hope upon the beams of God's house, but when God comes to cleanse and sweep his sanctuary, such cobwebs are soon fetched down. *Let self-righteous pharisees and hypocrites take warning in time!*

Jesus

Jesus Christ likened to a Star.

• Jesus Christ is called *The Morning Star*. An elegant and striking representation of him. He is beautiful in himself, and beneficial in his operation and influence. By the secret silent workings of his Spirit, he illuminates the *mind*, subdues the *will*, sanctifies the *affections*, and thus renews the whole man. He, by a small still voice, speaks eternal peace to the souls of his elect in the grand but mysterious work of their conversion. Now, have those illuminating and gracious beams from Jesus Christ ever penetrated into *our* dark and benighted souls? What do *we know* experimentally of the influence of this bright and illustrious *star*? Are we attracted and governed by it, as were the *wise men*? Are the clouds of darkness and ignorance, in any measure dispelled from our minds? Do we *live* as the sons of light; do we *walk* as children of the day? Oh! let us not deceive ourselves in matters of such eternal consequence! Examine yourselves whether you are actually in the faith or not. Doubtless, many *are* deceived; reader, are you sure that *you* are not?

Preaching, the indispensable duty of Pastors and Ministers.

The first branch of the great work incumbent upon a church-ruler, is to *teach*. A work this, for which none is too great, or too high. It is the work of charity, and charity is the work of *heaven*; which is ever laying out its influences upon the *needy*. Yea, it
is

is charity of the noblest kind; for he who teaches another the blessed truths of the gospel, gives an alms to his *soul*. He clothes the nakedness of his understanding, and relieves the wants of impoverished reason. He indeed, who rules well, leads the blind; but he who *teaches*, gives him *eyes*. And, let it be remembered, that it is a glorious thing, to have been the happy instrument in the hand of God, to repair a decayed intellect, and so to free it in a measure, from some of the inconveniencies and impediments of original sin. Doctrine is that which must prepare men for discipline, and men never go on so cheerfully, as when they see where they go. In order to constant preaching, men must have a good *stock*. The minister of God must be a scribe well furnished with things new and old. And when Jesus Christ says he must be thus furnished, we must not suppose that he intended, a preacher should have by him an hoard of old sermons (whoever made them) with a bundle of new opinions. For, this certainly, would be provision too *dry* for living christians and spiritual persons. What Jesus Christ intended was, doubtless, a rich variety of matter, and a copiousness of expression; that so he might be, as the great apostle Paul expresses it, APT TO TEACH.†

FALSHOOD & DETRACTION.

There is nothing in nature more universally *decried*, and at the same time *practised*, than falshood. Many things which have a mighty and controlling influence

† Query. When a professed *minister* wants this *aptitude* for *communicating* instruction, does he not want an essential qualification for the *ministry*?

upon

upon all human affairs, have their foundation in a lie. *Fame*, which sounds, sometimes, from all quarters of the world, and echos back to them again, what is it often, but a loud impudent overbearing lie? *History*, which unfolds to view past ages, and relates innumerable facts; in how many instances is it found a lie, either as to matter or manner? What are *promises* but so many lies? What are unmeaning and unnecessary compliments but so many lies? What are most of the oaths taken but lies? How many scarce ever use the bible but to *swear* upon it, and to *lie* against it? It is hard to say whether lying injures man, or dishonours God most: it is certainly an abomination to both. Whatever national, family, or personal disasters have ever taken place, upon due examination, it would be found that a *lie* was, first or last, the principle engine to effect it. Whether pride, lust, or cruelty produced the evil, it was falsehood which begat it; this gave it being, whatever gave it birth.

Detraction, is a killing, poisoned arrow, drawn out of the devil's quiver, which is always flying abroad, and doing execution in the *dark*. Against which no virtue is a defence, no innocence a security. As by *flattery* a man is frequently influenced to open his very heart, to his mortal enemy, so by *detraction* and misrepresentation, he shuts the same to his best friend. The most direct and efficacious way to ruin a man is to *misrepresent* him. The most *pious*, in all ages, have generally been the most slandered. And, God has sometimes overruled it greatly to their own benefit. *Serious reader*, hath God, in his providence, thought fit *thus* to drop a blot upon thy name, and to blast thy reputation? Perhaps he saw that the breath of popular applause was become infectious, and
would

would soon have brought a contagion upon thy better part. Pride and vain glory had mounted thee too high, and therefore it was necessary for mercy to bring thee down, and that to *prevent* a greater fall. *A good name is, indeed, better than life:* but a sound mind is better than both. Praise and human applause had swelled thee to a proportion ready to burst; it had corrupted and depraved all thy spiritual appetites: and brought thee to feed upon the air, and to surfeit upon the wind; and, in a word, to starve thy soul only to pamper thy imagination. Fame and glory are, in a sense, bewitching: they transport a man out of himself: and, like a violent wind, though it may bear him up for a while, it will be sure to let him fall at last. §

FREE GRACE.

Under a deplorable necessity of ruin and destruction does God's preventing grace find every sinner, when it snatches him, like a brand out of the fire; and often does it step in between the purpose and the commission of his next sin. Grace finds the sinner going on most resolutely in the high and broad way to perdition! Grace stops him in his mad career of vice and folly. He was going on in high and actual rebellion against God. Hence it is clear, that grace must needs flow from a redundant, unaccountable, fulness of compassion. Shewing mercy because it will shew mercy: from a compassion, which is and must be its

§ Is not this a *fine* comparison? And, is not both ancient and modern history an illustration and a *proof* of the lamentable truth asserted by the Doctor. To mention *names* would be to write a *catalogue!*

own

own reason ; and can have no argument for its exercise, but *itself*.

The idea of *merit* in a creature, a *sinful* creature, is among the first-born of all absurdities ! I affirm, that it is impossible, not only to sinful men, but to any mere creature, (however exalted a creature) properly to *merit* any thing from God his maker ; and that for two reasons : first, Because no one can merit of another but by doing something *of himself*, and independent of him from whom he would merit, yet to his advantage and for his benefit. But what can any creature do which may profit God ? What can men or angels contribute which may add to *his* felicity ? and, if we should suppose, that any action they could perform might do so, yet it could be no way meritorious, inasmuch as they do every thing by (not a power of their own, but) a power *derived from God*. So that in their most holy and exalted services they do but render back *his own*. The talent with which they trade, was *given* them ; nay, and what is more, the very *power* of trading is given them likewise. So that in their being and operations, they are not their own, but another's. They stand accountable for all to a superior bounty ; and surely, *restitution* is not merit.

Secondly, To merit is to do something over and above what is due, no two things being more opposite than *debt* and *merit*. But it is impossible, in the very nature of things, that any created agent should do any thing beyond what is duty ; inasmuch as it's duty is to do it's *utmost*. It is clear, therefore, that for any one, though an angel, to think of merit in his services, is but a dream and a chimera. But, for one who is a *sinner*, a fallen creature, to speak, or even
to

to think of merit, on his part, is preposterous madness! *Then, must not the reverend advocates for human merit, of whatever name, be in a state of spiritual lunacy?*

Human Righteousness.

Our nature is degenerate and corrupt; can such a nature produce a perfect and acceptable righteousness? Bring your most sincere and devout actions, sift, examine, and compare them, according to the just demands of the law, and the holiness of the divine nature; and judge whether it will be safe to venture your eternal all upon such a footing! Would men but duly consider how many things are requisite to make an action perfectly good, and how many such good actions are necessary to a perfect legal righteousness, they must immediately renounce their own, and submit to the righteousness of *him*, “ who is of God made unto us (that is to all who really believe) wisdom, *righteousness*, sanctification, and redemption.” This righteousness is revealed by the gospel. Let not the *Pharisee* be too confident: he may presume to justify himself upon the footing of his *own* righteousness, but, in the end, his purpose will be frustrated, and all his proud hopes will fall to the dust! Men may faint themselves and be condemned of God. They may be canonized on earth, and reprobated in heaven. And, oh! how fatal is a disappointment at last! It was said of the man who came to the marriage feast, and that without a *wedding garment*, being charged and apprehended for it, ἐπιμύθη, he was speechless! struck with *shame* and *silence*, the natural and proper effects of an overpowering guilt,

too

too manifest to be denied, and too gross to be defended. His reason deserted, and his voice failed him: finding himself arraigned, convicted, and condemned, in the court of his conscience. No man can pay to God a ransom for his forfeited life. Man is a transgressor, and is utterly unable to pay down to his righteous Judge any thing by way of just compensation or satisfaction. We have a striking instance of reasoning and enquiry about this matter, in Mic. vi. 7. " Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Alas! alas! this is talking about impossibilities: yet this serves to shew that all and every thing which a creature can do, is but *debt* and *duty*, and that surely, as was hinted before, is not meritorious. Let it be remembered that all merit is treasured up in the Saviour, the more HE is known and the fulness of his grace, and the perfection of his righteousness is *understood*, the more peace will the soul enjoy: and its confidence in Jesus Christ shall never be disappointed. " Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, he shall never be ashamed, world without end."

Influence of Example.

Nothing is or can be more contagious than an evil action set off with a *great example*, a person of distinction. For, it is natural to men to imitate those above them, and to endeavour to resemble, at least, that which they know they cannot be. And therefore whatever they see grandees do, with them it becomes current immediately, and passes *cum privilegio*; and no
man

man blushes at the imitation of a scarlet, a purple, or a *black* sinner, though the sin be so too. The greatest men have the greatest guilt to answer for.

I D O L A T R Y.

That man who places his confidence in, and derives his principal satisfaction and comfort from his estate, his friend, or his greatness in this world, and when *these* fail, desponds and is cast down, as though his *all* was lost. I say, that man *deifies* his estate, friend, and worldly greatness, as really as if he erected a temple to, and bowed down before them and worshipped them. Let every man, therefore, lay his hand upon his heart, and consider with himself what object engrosses his *supreme* affections; and he may rest assured that very object is *his* god: and, if he does not relinquish and renounce it, he must die an *idolater*, and perish in his sin.—Some men have so set their heart and soul upon the things of this world, that it is death to them to *think of dying*. They do not so much *depart* out of this world, as that they are *torn* from it, and the separation between this and them, is harder than that between their soul and body. Oh! how insupportable is the idea of parting with a fair inheritance, a thirty thousand pound fortune: a flourishing family, and a high dignity! How ill-disposed do they feel themselves to exchange their heaven below for one above! Let all such persons be assured, that whatever pretences they may, at any time make, of love to Jesus Christ, they certainly love that *most* which they wish to relinquish *last*. And such do well to consider that “Whoever will be a friend to the *world*, is the enemy of God.” They are as opposite as *light* and *darkness*.

The

The Glory of Christ in his Humiliation.

No sooner was Jesus Christ humbled, in his early infancy, to the meanness of a stable and a *manger*, for his accommodation, but the contempt of the place was taken off by the glory of the attendants, the *angelic hosts*. His submission to the ordinance of circumcision was enobled by the public attestation of *Simeon* concerning him. His fasting, temptation, and agony in the garden, attended by the ministration of angels. His baptism was recognized by a voice from heaven. At his crucifixion, the universal frame of nature gave testimony to his divinity. The vail of the temple was rent, the sun withdrew his light, and the very earth trembled! The whole creation seemed to sympathize with his sufferings. And by an astonishing resurrection and a glorious ascension, as by an argument *ex abundantia*, proved the divinity of his person over and over. §

§ In Christ's circumstances of humiliation, we see the reverse of all *worldly* greatness. A manger for his cradle—not a place of his own in which to lay his head—his associates poor fishermen—often hungry and thirsty—no money to pay tribute—a wreath of thorns for a crown—a reed, in derision, for a sceptre—the ignominious death of the cross—a borrowed grave!!! But, *faith* looks through the vail; and under that low *disguise* appears the Lord of glory, the King of kings—the heavens his throne—the earth his footstool—the light his garments—the clouds his chariot—the thunder his voice—his strength omnipotence—his riches all-sufficiency—his glory infinite—his retinue the hosts of heaven, and millions of redeemed saints. Saints, on whom he bestows riches unsearchable, an inheritance incorruptible, banquets of everlasting joys, and preferments of immortal honour; making them kings and priests unto God; conquerors; children of God, and mystically one with himself! All which lays a foundation for everlasting wonder, and inexpressible gratitude!!!

The Passion of our blessed Saviour.

In the sufferings of our great and adorable friend, there was a sword which reached to his spirit, and penetrated to his very soul, 'till that soul bled through his body! It was the struggles and throws of the inner man which produced that *crimson perspiration* recorded by St. Luke. It was herein that he trod the winepress of the wrath of God, 'till he became *red* in his apparel, and all his garments stained with blood! What tongue can express, what thought can conceive the amazing agony the Son of God sustained at that ever-memorable season! *Sin* and the wrath due to sin, appeared in all their tremendous circumstances! The *dishonour* done to God, and the *injury* sustained by man; together with every awakening consideration uniting in one awful effort to overwhelm his immaculate soul! Say, ye astonished angels! say, ye trembling worlds, was ever sorrow like unto *his* sorrow? Oh! what a memorable day was that when the Lord afflicted *our surety*, that we might be redeemed and eventually restored to the joys of paradise.

INFATUATION.

For a man to believe as *certain*, that he shall be judged according to the quality of his actions here, and receive an eternal recompence; and yet pursue with ardour all the pleasures of sin, is a *proof* of infatuation in a high degree! I ask, is it not a greater mark of phrenzy, than for a man to take a purse at *Tyburn*,† while he actually sees another hanged for a

† A place near Oxford Street, London; where malefactors used to be executed.

similar

similar crime? This is to defy the *justice* of heaven, to laugh at the thunder bolts of God, to puff at damnation, and, in a word, to bid omnipotence do its worst! He indeed, who thus walks, walks *surely* (according to the *word* in the text) but it is, because he is sure to be damned. For a man to run headlong into the bottomless pit, while the word of God assures him, that it is bottomless and open, and all return from it desperate and impossible; while his ruin stares him in the face, and the sword of vengeance points directly at his heart, still to press on his sinful course, is a problem not to be resolved, at least, upon any other ground than this, viz. that sin *infatuates* before it destroys. For *Judas* to receive and swallow the sop, when his master gave it him seasoned with these terrible words, "It had been good for that man, that he had never been born:" surely this argues a furious appetite, and a strong stomach, that could thus catch at a morsel, with the fire and brimstone flaming about it, and, as it were, digest death itself, and make a meal upon perdition!!!

DELAYED REPENTANCE.

Most men confess the necessity of repentance. Few understand it, in its evangelical and proper nature; and to *delay* putting it in practice, or seeking after it as a necessary and desirable blessing, is a prevailing evil of the times. Who can secure to himself a *future* day for that repentance which he believes to be absolutely necessary? Consider the frailties of nature, and the contingencies which happen: how soon and how suddenly either a disease from within, or a blow from without, may rend and bring down the strongest

constitution. A promised and presumed *futurity* is a perfect *uncertainty*; and uncertainty is no basis for confidence. How many are snatched off and hurried away to judgment in an unexpected moment, when they have power to repent of nothing but this, that they never repented *before*. See Mat. xxiv. 50, 51. The man who resolves only to secure himself by repenting at *last*, at the same time resolves to *continue sinning* until the last; which is, in effect, to impose upon God, and to affront him under the protection of his free mercy. Be not deceived, God will not be mocked: and the man who dares to trifle with Jehovah, must do it at the expence of his life, his soul, his all! A death-bed repentance is a common thing, but it is a very suspicious thing: it is *forced*, not free. But, that I may not discourage a poor *dying* penitent, I confess that a death-bed repentance *maybe* sincere and effectual. Because, repentance saves, not as it is *a work*, or such and such number of works; but as it is the effect of a *renewed* nature, and a sanctified heart. But now, considering that the renovation of our nature is the sole immediate work of God's Spirit, it may certainly be wrought (if God so please) in the last moment of our lives. For, being a new *creation*, and the production of a certain quality in the soul, which quality was not there before; by an infinite power it may be effected in an instant. The penitent thief upon the cross, is an illustrious instance of sovereign and efficacious grace in this particular respect. His repentance began no sooner, nor, indeed, quite so soon as his crucifixion, and yet ended in the paradise of God! Now this was not designed to encourage *delay*, but to prevent *despair*. If God brings a sinner to himself at last, and so makes his death-bed a portal to heaven; for my part, I have nothing to object,

object, I have nothing to do, but to congratulate my poor fellow sinner who obtains the blessing, and humbly adore the *mercy* which bestows it.

However, it is certain that Jehovah has adjusted his whole plan of proceeding, and the order of things is established inviolable. According to which there is a time to *pardon* and a time to *punish*; and the time of one is not the time of the other. When the corn hath once felt the sickle, it hath no more benefit from the sunshine. In a matter of such consequence as *repentance*, delay is not only imprudence but *folly*—the *highest* folly. Our next moments are uncertain. Have not many died with the *guilt* of sin, and the *designs* of repentance together? Now, if a man dies to day by the prevalence of some ill-humours, will it avail him that he *intended* to have bled and purged to-morrow? Many a man thinks he sins securely, under the shelter of some remote *purposes* of amendment. But how does that man, who thus deludes himself, know but that the decree is past, the bow is now drawn, and the arrow levelled at his heart. Soon, some virulent disease, some sudden disaster, may stop his breath, and reap him down as a sinner ripe for destruction!

The final and fatal Disappointment.

Surely it is highly *probable* that there will be a *future state*, a state of rewards and punishments, administered with infinite grace and eternal justice. And then the voluptuous and the unbeliever will be miserably left in the lurch! For such, there can be no retreat. In the other world there can be no mending the choice made in *this*. Sinner, there is no *after* game to be *played* in hell. Let it penetrate deep into thine heart,

that " Now, and now only, is the day of salvation." Let it be considered, that for a man, while he lives in this world, to *doubt* whether there is any hell or no, and thereupon *so to live*, as if, positively, there were none; but when he *dies*, to find himself confuted in the flames, this must be the height of woe and disappointment! This must be a bitter conviction of an irrational venture, and an absurd choice. In all doubtful cases, reason will still determine for the *safer* side; especially if the case be not only doubtful but of vast importance. And, in *this* case the venture is of a soul and an eternity!

Now, for a man to found a confident practice upon a disputable principle, is, in a brutish way to outrun his reason, and to build ten-times wider than his foundation. This one consideration is a sufficient ground upon which any rational man may embrace the principles and engage in the practice of *religion*, namely THAT IT IS GOOD TO BE SURE. I defy the most subtle infidel to confute this.

CHRIST AS OUR MEDIATOR, an eternal wonder.

Could a finite understanding have contrived, much less brought about the *incarnation* of a Deity? clothed the Almighty with flesh and blood? and abased the King of kings to the form of a servant! Could we, I say, ever have thought of such a mediator, as might be both *man*, that he might suffer, and *God*, to give infinite value to those very sufferings? A mediator, who, taking upon him our nature, should undergo the strokes of an infinite wrath, and having a divine nature, could sustain the whole weight of suffering,

fering, and not sink. Such a mediator, as might not only, as by his *passive* obedience, loose the bands of death, and rescue our souls from hell ; but also by his *active* righteousness, secure us a title to the joys of heaven, and the blessings of our Father's house. This will be matter of astonishment and praise to all eternity!

“ Amazing work ! look down ye skies,
 “ Wonder and gaze with all your eyes !
 “ Ye heav’nly thrones stoop from above,
 “ And bow to *this* mysterious love.”

PRESUMPTION.

Three things enter into and constitute the nature of a presumptuous sin : 1st, A man undertakes an action which he knows to be unlawful, at least *doubtful* ; 2dly, Notwithstanding this, he assures himself that no punishment will follow ; and 3dly, He acts, through the whole, from the most unwarrantable and unreasonable motives. Now, the *presuming* sinner, knowing that the action he is about to do is unlawful, at least doubtful, proceeds to deliberate with himself. Perhaps he will argue the case on both sides, as to the *pleasure* and as to the *danger* attending it ; and under strong temptation and blind partiality, he resolves upon the act, be the consequence what it may. Thus from *suspense* he passes on to *resolution*, and from resolution to the *action*, and so stands before God and man a presumptuous sinner. Having now brought his sin to maturity through all the by-traces, all the obstructions and impediments, that either conscience or providence laid in his way.

Could we but hear the secret language of the sinners thoughts, we should hear them labouring to satisfy, or rather to stifle the dictates of conscience by such reflections as these :—What mischief ever befall such an *oppressor*, such a *tyrant*, such a *cheat*, such and such a *drunkard*, *liar*, &c.—And because *they* never saw the marks of God's displeasure upon them, they foolishly resolve to venture.—They see not the *smoke* of the bottomless pit, and so they dread not the *fire*.

ILLUSTRIOUS IDLENESS.

Too many think that they are not born to *labour*, because they are born to *estates*; but the sentence which God passed upon *Adam*, when he disobeyed, is universal: we find in it no exception or proviso for any noble or illustrious *drone*. No greatness can privilege any man whatever to lie basking in sloth and indolence; or to eat the labour of the husbandman, only to sleep at ease, as a useless lump of well-clothed, well-descended earth—*Earth*, not for fruitfulness, but for *heaviness* only. Such a character serves no other end in society, but to make one in *number*. Such a conduct is hiding our talent with a witness! and the rust of that talent will rise in judgment against its possessor. *Reader*, do you labour at extensive *usefulness* in the world, according to that sphere of life, in which the providence of God has placed you? You are *accountable* to him both for your time and talents. Oh! beware of *indolence*.

PRODIGALITY & INTEMPERANCE.

The scriptures commend but one prodigal, and that only for his *repenting* of his prodigality. If we reflect

reflect upon the manners and conduct of this fashionable spendthrift, we may see his prodigality bringing him down from his high-spirited companions, and his riotous feasts, and all his gay entertainments, to the *swine* and to the *trough*. A haughty and a licentious spirit, both precedes and portends a *fall*. Prodigality is the devil's steward and purse-bearer, and serves to minister unto, and foster every species of sin and folly. It is next to impossible, in the nature of things, for a prodigal to be guilty of no other vice, but prodigality: it is the fruitful parent of many evils. In proof of this, consult *parents*, that have died of a broken heart; *wives*, that have fallen an early prey to poverty, widowhood and wretchedness; *children*, that have become friendless and forsaken. And a thousand objects which are now exposed to various scenes of wretchedness and woe.—Men are generally false and treacherous even to themselves in regard to their greatest and best concerns; wretchedly weak and pliant to their innate viciousness; when that viciousness is once inflamed by the stimulus of wealth and plenty. Hence many hopeful young men debauch and drown themselves in the depths of sensuality, and at length lose both their souls and their wits too; and that only because it was their lot to be born to great estates, and thereby to have money enough to keep pace with their lewd desires. All excess, either in eating or drinking, most certainly beclouds and dulls the *intellectual* powers. And, it is not to be expected, that the *conscience* should bear up when the understanding is drunk down. An epicure's *practice*, naturally and almost necessarily leads to an epicure's *principles*. The man who makes his belly his business, will soon come to have a *conscience* as large as his *swallow*. Loads of meat and drink are
fit

fit for none but beasts of burden to bear; and he is certainly the greater beast of the two who carries his burden in his *belly*, than he which carries it upon his *back*. Abstinence is a friend to the *mind*: it strengthens the memory, clears the apprehension, and sharpens the judgment. It gives the powers of reason their utmost play, their fullest latitude. Men are thereby the better capacitated for profound study, deep research, and vigorous exertion. It is generally found, that such as are most able at the *bottle*, are most weak at the *book*.

If a man would have a fine and a vigorous understanding, he *must* guard against two things, namely, *sensuality* and *covetousness*. For, covetousness has much the same effect upon the mind as sensuality: that is to say, it *darkens* it. Of all the vices which prevail among mankind, there is no one which more powerfully carries the soul *downwards* than covetousness. It makes it all *earth*: it buries that noble principle which can never die. So that, while the body is above ground, the *mind* is under it, and must of necessity be in darkness while it converses in the regions of it.

Worldly pleasure melts the soul through the body, as lightning does the sword through the scabbard. Can the body be pampered and the soul not grow wanton? Can the carnal objects of sense be received and yet not leave a tincture upon the *mind*? I believe that christians too generally find in their own experience, that when the body is filled and feasted, the soul is never so little disposed to hunger and thirst after righteousness. *Herod*, after his feast is ready to behead *John*, but not so ready to hear that illustrious messenger of God. Let the *drunkard* remember, that no man can be always *pouring* in, but in the course of a few years, and perhaps less, he will drown both his
health

health and his strength in his own belly: and after all his vile intemperance, at length drink *down* himself too; and that certainly will and must put an end to the debauch.

INFIDELITY CONFOUNDED.

The *resurrection* of our blessed Saviour must nonplus every infidel in the world, who will but seriously consider the matter. If this does not satisfy the mind, in regard to the *truth* of christianity, I affirm that it is not in the power of man to invent, and, I had almost said, of God to perform, any greater thing to persuade mankind of the truth of a doctrine. I am bold to say, it would nonplus the wisdom of all the angels to find out a brighter argument to convince and confound infidelity. And I dare aver, that he who disbelieves the fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead, would scarce believe though he rose from the dead himself. So that, if (after this) he continues an *infidel*, he does (in effect) give heaven the lie, and he bids the Almighty convince him if he can. He is miracle-proof, and beyond the reach of persuasion; nor, indeed, like to be convinced, until it is too late for him to be converted.

When Jesus Christ avouched such doctrines, precepts, promises, and threatenings, as he did, for solemn and important truths; and to prove his words, restored sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead; stilled the roaring winds, and calmed the tempestuous ocean by a word, and all this before his *enemies*, who very spitefully and therefore thoroughly sifted all his actions, and yet were constrained to confess the miracle: if, I say, Jesus Christ performed

performed these miracles to confirm his doctrine; then it clearly follows, that either God must have exerted his divine power to confirm a falsity, or the doctrine so confirmed must be *true*. So pregnant an argument, and such convincing evidence must leave an infidel *without excuse*.

ENVY.

When a man cannot vent his rage outwardly, he is sure to grieve and mourn and bleed *inwardly*; like a wretch falling on his own sword, because he cannot thrust it into the body of one whom he hates. Envy hates abroad and grieves at home. Guilt and sadness are its inseparable companions; it being impossible, upon the principles of philosophy and religion, for an envious man to possess either a good conscience or a chearful mind. It is the great and *good* that are envied. Envy sucks poison out of the finest and the sweetest flowers. It is not safe for any one to be much commended, to be borne upon the wings of fame, and to ride in triumph upon the tongues of men: For the tongues of some do but provoke the *teeth* of others. Men generally detract more heartily than ever they commend. Shadows do not more naturally attend shining bodies, than envy pursues worth and merit. Envy is a sharp blighting east wind, killing the noblest productions of virtue, grace and good sense.

DIVINE GOVERNMENT,

as it respects the Church and People of God.

Though, *to us*, God's dispensations may seem confused, and his judgments misplaced; yet the whole

whole is managed by such an infinitely wise contrivance, that, could we take a view of them as they lay in the counsel of God, and compare the *design* with the *proceeding*, we should confess, that they were disposed and ordered by a rectitude of judgment far surpassing all human conception. When we think that his ways are imperfect, we should recollect, that the impression is only in our weak understanding. It is not the earth, or the trees which turn round; but the truth is, we are giddy and *think* so. In all the dispensations of God, it highly becomes creatures like us to acknowledge the undoubted equity of his principles, and our ignorance of his peculiar and wise methods. And *this*, is not only humility but philosophy, for it argues that we have made considerable progress in knowledge; and understand something of God, as well as ourselves. God may be angry with his child and yet not *hate* him. He may chastise him with his rod, yet love him with his whole heart. God may register the same name in the book of his eternal and gracious election, which he suffers to be proscribed on earth. And, as things have been and yet are in the world, eternal salvation in the *other* world may yet consist with certain destruction in *this*. While storms and tempests distress a man here *below*, all may be calm and fair *above*.

It is observable that all the various transactions in the whole work of man's redemption and salvation, carry in them the marks, not only of *grace* and *mercy*, but of grace and mercy acting by a wise and absolute *sovereignty*. And that for this very reason (as may justly be supposed) to convince the world that it was purely *mercy* on God's part, without any thing of *merit* on the part of man, which did all. For when God reveals a Saviour to some *few*, but withholds that
from

revelation from many ; sends Jesus Christ to a people despised, but passes over nations honourable, victorious and renowned : he thereby gives the world to understand that his own will is the reason of all his proceedings. Where the plea of the receivers is *equal* in itself, and yet the dispensation of benefits vastly unequal, there men are taught, by the clearest demonstration, that the benefits received are wholly of grace. And, every believer must fall down at the foot-stool of divine mercy, and say, " By the *grace* of God I am what I am."

God, as a sovereign and a father, may, in the way of his all-governing providence, sweep away a man's estate, remove a valuable friend, suffer his reputation to be stained ; and yet the design of this may be, not revenge but *remedy* ; not destruction but discipline. He sees, perhaps, some evil to be cured ; or foresees some evil to be prevented ; some luxuriations that must be curtailed, and some malignant humours that must be eradicated. All which require some severe and painful applications. And, in all the hard passages of providence, when God strips a man of all that is near and dear to him, his intention may be, not to make him miserable, but to make him *humble* ; not to ruin but *reduce* him.

Remember, Christian, God's anger is not *hatred*. The most singular saints, and the most choice vessels of mercy, have shared in the painful manifestations of his displeasure. God was angry with *Moses*, angry with *David*, angry with *Hezekiah*, and with *Israel* his peculiar people ; but, did he *hate* them ? Let recovering and sanctifying grace say. The effects of his anger differ as much from the effects of his hatred, as the sensible smart of present pain, from the corrosive anguish of an abiding poison. The heats of it may
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be very dreadful, and its flames may terrify the mind, but it is such a fire, that though it *burns*, it never *consumes* the bush. However, though it does not bring God's elect under the *power*, it may, and sometimes does, bring them into the *shadow* of death, into the very suburbs of hell. It gives them a glimpse of infernal horrors, a taste of those phials of wrath which are only poured out in full measure upon *impenitent sinners*.

Sinner, God is thine enemy! An enemy the most formidable, because irresistible and always victorious. Oh! reflect with thyself, and consider how amazing is the wrath of a conquering enemy! When anger sits upon a victorious sword, who dares approach it, who does not fly before it? We tremble to read of whole fields strewed with carcases, countries deluged with blood, flourishing cities so completely overturned that one stone has not been left to cover the ruins of another! And yet these are but the works of a pitiful enraged *creature*, whose breath is in his nostrils, and whose rage cannot outlast it. Now, if these distressing consequences of a mortal anger are so terrible, what can be said, what can be conceived of an *Almighty* wrath, of an *infinite* indignation? And it is *this* wrath, it is *this* indignation which is awakened, and brought down upon men by SIN. "What meanest thou, O sleeper! arise, call upon thy God. Escape for thy life! Flee, instantly flee from the wrath to come."

The Love of Jesus Christ.

The whole love of Christ to man appears in his sufferings, his amazing sufferings for him. And that love appears immense, unsearchable! The whole
weight

weight of divine wrath due to *us*, fell on him, and he voluntarily endured its utmost fury, that we might drink the refreshing streams of divine consolation. The inexpressible wrath of God fell from heaven upon him, as a tremendous thunder-storm, from which there could be no flight, no shelter; so that it entirely crushed his human nature, and the extremity of pain and anguish dissolved the bond between his innocent soul and body. He was brought into the blackest regions of death and darkness, and his *love* brought him there; that we might be brought into the happy regions of light and immortality. All the direful stings of God's anger fastened upon him, all the poisoned darts of divine vengeance struck into his immaculate soul! His love and his sufferings were both beyond all parallel; and from the one you may well take the dimensions of the other. See thy Saviour agonizing in the garden! bleeding on the cross, O my soul, and weep tears of gratitude and joy! Nothing but an infinite power *could* sustain such an accumulated weight of woe, and nothing short of an infinite love *would* sustain it.

Reader, fix your meditation, for a moment, upon the *cross*, the illustrious cross. See the precious Lamb of God, hanging, bleeding, dying, for the guilty sons of men; and say, *was ever grace like this!!!* Here you read the love of Jesus. Every thorn was a pencil to delineate and represent, and every groan was a trumpet, to publish abroad his love to man, to *sinful* man. Surely our love must be cold indeed if the consideration of his dying love cannot inflame it! This consideration, as a light shining in a dark place, serves to discover the heinous nature of *sin*. O how black and dismal a thing is *sin*! We may, therefore, justly conclude, that since Jesus Christ has discovered such

such astonishing love, and brought life and immortality to light by his precious gospel, there is, there can be no *monster* in all the productions of nature equal to the SINNER; the wretch who can sin in opposition to *such* love. †

The Danger and Consequence of Denying Christ.

Who knows or can possibly conceive, how many woes are crowded into this one sentence? *I will deny him.* It is a compendious expression of *hell*, an eternity of torments comprised in a word! It is condemnation itself, and that from the mouth of a *Saviour!* What inexpressible horror must seize upon a wretched sinner when he stands arraigned at the bar of divine justice! when he shall look about and see his Judge, his accusers, and the witnesses; and every one of these his unrelenting enemy. His own conscience, armed with a thousand stings and rending the caul of his heart. If the aspect of Jesus Christ was so fearful when he once looked a *denier* into repentance (Peter) what will it be when he shall look such an one into perdition? When he shall pronounce the tremendous sentence, *Depart from me.* Every word will come upon the sinner like an arrow striking

† The person, the love, and the work of Christ, afford matter for eternal meditation and joy. Here shines spotless justice, incomprehensible wisdom, and infinite love, all at once. None of them darkens or eclipses another; each one gives a lustre to the rest. They mingle their beams and shine with united splendor. The just judge, the merciful father, and the wise governor. No other object gives such a display of all these perfections. No where does justice appear so awful, mercy so amiable, or wisdom so profound, as in a CRUCIFIED CHRIST. The cross of Christ was the noontide of everlasting love; the meridian splendor of eternal mercy.

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through his reins; like thunder and lightning, which alarms and consumes at the same instant. Wisdom and justice unite to pronounce the sentence, and omnipotence inflicts the blow! Professor, be *bold* as well as prudent in your confession of the Saviour. It will be heaven to be owned by him at last.

The WORLD a SNARE.

Worldly-minded men will certainly find at last, that the strait gate is indeed *too narrow* for any man whatever to come in like an *Atlas*, with the world upon his shoulders. Great possessions, and great corruptions, are insurmountable obstacles. The former must be renounced and the latter must be subdued, or there can be no admission into the kingdom of God. Carnal and spiritual interests can never coalesce, they are diametrically opposite. Heaven and earth are at too great a distance ever to be united. And, if so, we see where our infidelity leaves us, even in the regions of horror and despair! It is a bitter reflection, when a man shall look upon his rich farms, elegant mansions, vast possessions, and his conscience secretly whispers to his mind, that this, as a portion of his own choosing, is *all* which he must expect for ever! When he shall eat and drink the price of his *soul*, and pay down *eternity* itself for every morsel. So that he never sits down to his well-furnished table, but, like *Esau*, he sees his birth-right served up to him in a mess. Such a man is mortified, in the extreme, when, upon whatever he *looks*, whatever he *wears*, upon whatever he *treads*, the recollection of the *price* of all is still revived upon his conscience. It is this which steals away the soul of every enjoyment: and the mirth of the feast is awfully checked by a consideration

sideration of the *reckoning*. “Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting,” is enough to make any man’s knees smite one against another.

There is a certain passage of God’s word in Luke the 13th, to read which is enough to make any considerate man tremble. “Strive, says the Son of God, strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able.” What! *seek* to enter and yet find no entrance? Good God of heaven! what then will become of those countless multitudes who *never seek* at all, who never put themselves to the expence of one hearty exertion about the matter. The world and its *cares*, or the world and its *pleasures*, engross, not only a great part, but the whole of their attention. Does *it* engross the whole of *yours*, Reader? If many who come *striving*, and crying Lord, Lord, shall yet have the door shut against them! what will become of the slothful, the intemperate and the lewd? Upon what foundation under heaven or above it, may *such* persons build their hopes?

Considering how many have been ensnared by the world and perished in those snares; considering the difficulty and importance of a man’s salvation, can there be a more cogent argument to stimulate a man’s industry in that great concern, to be covetous of every moment, and to redeem his time with a vigour of thought and attention equal to the weight of his *eternal* concerns? He that hath far to go and much to do, is concerned to rise *early*. Oh! lay aside every weight and the sin which does most easily beset you, and run with patience the race set before you, and God grant you may so run as finally to obtain.

Let the men who have been most insatiable in their desires after worldly honour and advantage, who have been the greatest lovers of pleasure, and admirers of a splendid and fashionable life, invariably pursuing the same with eager appetite; let these men reflect with attention, and say whether they have not been rather *wearied* than satisfied. How have they been rewarded for their affectionate attachment? Perhaps poverty, disease, and infamy; at least, dissatisfaction and disappointment have been sure. "What *fruit* had ye, enquires an Apostle, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" There is emptiness in the enjoyment, and remorse in the recollection. *Present* they deceive, and being past they disturb. Go over the regions of hell, and there you will see in what manner sin and the world have rewarded men for their attachment and service. Sin and Satan deceive men here and they destroy men hereafter. Now, an *hereafter* is all in all, because it is there alone that either happiness or misery are considerable, as being then unchangeable.

Look over the whole universe, and you shall scarcely find an object in it but what Satan makes use of as a *weapon* or a *snare* to injure us. Since the fall, and by the machinations and arts of Satan, the whole world, and all things in it, seem *reversed*; and instead of administering comfort to man, appear to combine their powers, and unite their efforts, to punish and destroy him. The most beautiful and desirable things of the world, often prove the most deadly and pernicious. While we live in the world, we tread upon snares, and such things as have a strange and peculiar energy to work our ruin. "Be sober, be vigilant." See christian, how the world first entangles and then destroys such as presume to
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come within the compass of its mortal embraces! One man is taken with the *riches* of it, which he pursues, admires, and at length adores, and so makes his gain his god. But, in time, he is sure to find his god desert him, and leave him in the hand of the devil. Another finds his mind dazzled with the splendor of worldly *honours*. He is taken in the snare, and enlists under the banners of Satan. Another is taken by the *pleasures* of the world, and so suffers himself to be carried away with that general torrent of voluptuousness, which runs violently and drowns certainly. The man first makes himself a *swine*, and then the devil enters into him, and hurries him into the gulph of eternal perdition. Christian, nothing will more certainly cool thy love to God and his ways, than a sinful compliance with the vain customs and fashions of the *world*.

TEMPTATION.

Satan, being a spirit, can operate upon the mind, and influence the imagination, in a very subtle and astonishing way. He can raise in the imagination evil thoughts, filthy desires, by the representation of objects best suited to our predominant affections. In this way he often slides into the heart, without the least resistance, and almost without observation. Thus he is said to have filled the hearts of *Ananias* and *Saphira*: and to have entered into *Judas*. Which was done, principally, by injecting wicked thoughts into the minds of those wretched persons. Satan is often at work within us when we little think of it: and is secretly undermining our peace, and overthrowing our joy. Planting his engines, and laying his trains, to fetch down, if it were possible, all that

spiritual building which the Holy Ghost has erected within the soul. This enemy to God and righteousness creeps into our bosoms, and lodges himself in our very hearts, and that before we are aware of his designs. So sly and so subtle is this enemy, that he actually tampers with our thoughts, our desires and particular inclinations, before we are aware that he is near us! On these accounts we may be sure, that he is such an enemy, as *will* make his way: Oh let us watch and pray, that he may not make a *conquest*.

The devil was to induce *Eve* to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and that against the express command of God, guarded by a tremendous denunciation of wrath. An hard task to undertake! To bring a person, both *innocent* and *wise*, to such an horrid prevarication, and actually to eat the forbidden fruit, though served up to her with certain *death*! "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." And, doubtless, the enemy would never have succeeded, had not *unbelief* cut the way before him. As soon as he brought her to *disbelieve* the word which God had declared, and to be persuaded that she should *not* die, if she did eat; the devil's work was then done. Upon this she takes the fatal morsel, and eats death and confusion to herself and her posterity.

Perhaps there cannot be a stronger argument to evince the necessity for a superior *good spirit*, to assist and bear men through the difficulties of a christian course, than this, that beside a man's own natural corruption, there is an *evil spirit* intent upon his seduction, and continually active to draw him aside. Upon which account most certainly it is, that the heart of man, so weak *within* and so assaulted from
without,

without, if not supported and encouraged by a superior power, is by no means equal to the slightest efforts of the tempter.

It is infinitely dangerous to parley with a temptation. It being usually with the heart of a man and a temptation, as it was with *Esau* and his brother *Jacob*; while *Esau* was marching towards him, he fully *purposed* to fight him, but as soon as he came to him, he *embraced* him. It is a saying worthy to be wrote in the heart of every man, with the pen of a diamond. Eccles. iii. 26. *He who loves danger, shall perish by it.* And that man who can be so egregiously mistaken, as to imagine that he can learn sobriety among the debauched, chastity in the stews, modesty at balls and plays, and the like, will soon leave his virtue behind him, and the character of his company, and the image of their vices, will be drawn in deep and lasting impressions upon his soul. There is no such thing as *gathering grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles.* There is no such thing as turning the incentives of vice into instruments of virtue. Carnal company is more dangerous than an epidemick fever. Few, if any, have ventured, but have *suffered*. Reader, stand upon thy guard continually.

When a man feels himself strongly tempted, and the evil to which he is tempted appears, *small* and the gratification and pleasure *great*, and recovery from the snare *easy*. If that man would not be be-fooled to his eternal injury, then let him not look merely upon the *outside* or at the *beginning* of the temptation. Even the beginning of a *tragedy* is pleasant, but the *close* of it is not so. Let him not judge of what the tempter intends by what he *offers*; for 'be it what it will, look it never so gay, and promise never so fair, there is an injury *designed*. Can a christian man

imagine, for a moment, that Satan, his avowed *enemy*, is at all concerned either for his pleasure or profit? Certainly not. In all this fair *shew* he is but setting his trap, and no man sets a trap but he *baits* it too. Satan hates most *implacably*, while he offers most *plausibly*. His design in every one of his temptations, is to separate between the soul and its chief good for ever. Farther than this he cannot go, and short of this he would not stop. Every temptation, not overcome and defeated, certainly destroys. Temptation *flatters* in the beginning, *domineers* in the progress, and *damns* in the issue!

Christians ought carefully to watch and earnestly to pray against temptation, because a man may have the whole frame of his spiritual state and circumstances so broken and shattered by a temptation, that he may not be able to recover so much of his former confidence, as to enjoy one cheerful day all his life after, but go on in sadness and uncertainty to the end. Clouds may gather that may never be wholly dispersed to his dying day. O then *watch* and *pray*.

Samson, a judge of Israel, and a terror to his enemies, a man made up of miracles, by indulging a temptation rendered himself a scoff and a by-word to the nations round him (as every vicious and voluptuous prince must needs be.) By temptation he was transformed, and made a greater miracle of folly and weakness, than ever he had been of strength; and a greater disgrace to his country than ever he had been a defence; and from a judge of Israel, he became a judgment upon it.

In every temptation, the tempter's *design*, is not only the guilt and ruin of that one person tempted, but, if possible, to make him an instrument to communicate

municate and spread the evil, and if he cannot destroy the person, to bring reproach upon his *profession*.—Satan is expert at his art, he does not lay the same baits indifferently for all sorts of game. He artfully suits his temptations to the constitution and circumstances of the person he tempts; he strikes home, and seldom but he speeds sooner or later. Therefore let a man look well to himself, and be all eye and all attention; such an experienced enemy will soon discover his weak side, and strike him there. Let a man view and review himself, and observe where he lies open to a fatal thrust, and there let him place a double guard. The *strength* of a temptation generally lies in the strength of a man's corruption; and the tempter for the most part prevails, not so much by what he suggests to a man, as by what he finds *in* him. Our lusts and corrupt affections give the tempter such a mighty power and advantage over us. If these were thoroughly mortified the temptation must certainly fail of effect.—Greater numbers have been destroyed by temptation than repentance ever saved: It is *this* which has peopled hell, and enlarged the dominions of satan. *This* has carried the black trophies of his conquests far and wide. It is *this* by which satan has done such terrible execution upon souls; for, were he not skilful to *insinuate*, he never could *destroy*. He lays hold of the *affections* and the *will*, and then draws the whole man after him; nor can he lead any into the bottomless pit, till they are as willing to *follow* as he to *lead*. If you would not fall by the insidious arts of this subtle enemy, oh! then guard against the baits laid for your *affections*.

CARNAL

CARNAL SECURITY.

Let a professor become heedless, supine, and worldly, and conscience will by slow and sure degrees, become dull, and from not discerning *motes*, at length will overlook *beams*. From carelessness it will fall into a slumber, and then settle in a deep and awful *sleep*. A sleep, from which nothing will awake the man but the flames of hell. A rusted conscience will never discover to a man his real condition. It will leave him perfectly in the dark as to the greatest interests he hath in both worlds. Let no man conclude that because his conscience says *nothing* to him, that therefore it hath nothing *to say*. Perhaps, *reader*, you never doubted of the safety of your condition to this day. Then rest assured that you have a great deal the more reason to doubt it *now*. The causes of such a perfect *silence* in the conscience, are gross ignorance or the rooted custom of sinning, and these are dreadful symptoms to all such as are not hell and damnation-proof! When a man's wounds cease to smart, only because he has lost his *feeling*, they are nevertheless mortal, though he does not see or feel his need of a surgeon.

All things considered, there is enough to keep a professor *awake*. Besides the temptations of *Satan*, and the powerful allurements of the *world*, we have an enemy within our *own breasts*. And, surely a bosom-enemy must be as great an evil, as a bosom-friend is a blessing. It is certain, that the body of sin and death, which dwells within, is an adversary which will be always annoying us, a kind of domestic tempter, always at our elbow to seduce and
thereby

thereby to ruin us; so that which ever way we turn our thoughts, we shall find there are enemies ready to molest us in all our spiritual concerns. If we consider the *invisible* world, there is the devil and his legions, formed in battle array against us, and meditating our ruin. If we look upon things *visible*, we soon perceive that the whole world is engaged on the same side. And, if we examine *ourselves* we shall find that our bodies furnish weapons for the same war; and our hearts are full of treachery and infidelity. Is there not abundant reason to cry, *who shall deliver us* from such powerful enemies? How shall we be enabled to bear up against such unequal force? Surely it must be no *ordinary* assistance that must bring us off, both secure and victorious. If the strong man be indeed overcome, depend upon it, it must be by one stronger than himself. These things duly considered, I ask, is there any time to waste in indolent and careless slumbers? Surely not.

Interesting and important SENTENCES
which occur in different parts of the
Doctor's Sermons.

The good man spends as one who knows he must come to a *reckoning*.—Scarce ever has any man of *no conscience*, continued a man of *any credit* long.—A *dishonest* man is rotten at heart; no *preferment* can sweeten him, but the higher he stands, the farther and wider he smells.—Chastity makes no work for the surgeon, nor ever ends in *rottenness* of the *bones*.—Sin is the fruitful parent of all distempers, and *ill lives* occasion *good physicians*.—Seldom do we
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see in cities, courts, and rich families (where men live plentifully, and eat and drink freely) that perfect health, and athletick vigour of constitution, which is found among the plain country people.—Let the daring sinner remember, that there is no drinking, or swearing, or ranting a soul out of its *immortality*; that must and will survive in spite of death and the grave.—Seldom does any man of sense, make his servant his *counsellor*, for fear of making him his governor too.—It is a noble and great thing to cover the blemishes, and to excuse the failings of other men.—It is the excellence of friendship to rectify, at least to qualify, the malignity of false aspersions and those surmises, that would misrepresent a friend, and traduce him in our thoughts.—Presence of mind is good, but *haste* is not so.—In the solemn concern of prayer, to pretend to reverence when there is *no* premeditation, is both impudence and contradiction.—It is not under the gospel of Christ, as it is under *some* laws of men, where you must be forced to *buy* their counsel, and frequently pay dear for bad advice. No, his communication of wisdom and instruction are all *free*.—Jesus Christ is made unto us not only sanctification and redemption, but wisdom too: we are his members, and it is but natural, that all the members of the body should be guided by the wisdom of the head.—In God's laws, the *words* are few, the *sense* vast and infinite. In human laws you are sure to have words enough; but, for the most part, to discern the sense and reason of them, you need to read them with a *microscope*.—Seldom is there *much* spoke, but something or other had better *not* been spoke.—Loquacity storms the ear, but *modesty* takes the heart. Much speaking is generally the effect of self confidence.—The great
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sin of the *pharisees* was, that they promoted and abetted the sins of other men, taught the devil's doctrine out of Moses' chair, and by putting a false gloss upon the divine precepts, cut assunder the binding *force* of them.—He who has vented a pernicious doctrine, or published an injurious book, sins as it were, in his very grave ; corrupts others while he is rotting himself.—*Players* and *procurists* are traders for hell, the corruptors of youth, equally desperate in their fortunes and in their manners, and getting their very bread by the damnation of souls.—*Idolatry* is, not only worshipping that for God, which is not God, but it is also worshipping the true God in a way wholly incongruous to his nature ; and particularly by the mediation of images. This is idolatry, as appears from Romans the first chapter.—To hide one's *talent* in the ground, is to *bury* it ; and the *burial* of a thing either finds it *dead*, or will quickly *make it so*.—It must be no ordinary declension of human nature, that will bring a man after a good education, to place his *summum bonum* upon his *trencher*, and his utmost felicity in wine and women.—There is nothing great or considerable which may be done or even ventured upon, without *preparation*. Is it not irrational and dangerous to engage in any thing *extempore*, where the concern is *eternity* ?—*Habitual* preparation for the Lord's *supper*, consists in an abiding *principle* of holiness, wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God ; called in scripture, the *new birth*, the *new man*, the *incorruptible seed* ; and by which a man is so universally changed, and transformed in the whole frame and temper of his soul, as to have a new judgment and sense of things, new desires, appetites and inclinations.—It is evident, that if a man would have

a devout, humble, sin-aborning, self-denying frame of spirit, he cannot pursue a more effectual method, than *praying* himself into it.—Hasty conclusions are but too common with men; it being so much easier, in all investigation of truth, to suppose, than to *prove*, to believe than *distinguish*.—When a king with 10,000, is to meet a king coming against him with 20,000, Christ advises him, before he ventures the issue of the battle, to *sit down and consider*. A court parasite would give him very different counsel, and bid him only reckon his 10,000, 40,000, call his *fool-hardiness* valour, and then he may go on *boldly*, because *blindly*, and by mistaking himself for a *lion*, perish like an *ass*.—In regard to worldly property, it will be found but a poor comfort, to have possessed ever so great a share of God's *bounty*, without his *blessing*.—A day will come when many shall *wish* they had never been *rich*, or *great*; and reflect with bitter anguish upon those splendid occasions of sin, which served only to heighten their *guilt*, and to inflame their accounts at the tribunal of God.—Christian, remember, that whether by health or sickness, or honour or disgrace, wealth or poverty, *mercy* is still contriving, acting, and carrying on the spiritual good of thy soul.—*Conscience* must be rightly informed, before its testimony can be authentic.—It is highly absurd to imagine, that either law or gospel will absolve what conscience *condemns*.—Much *reading* is like much *eating*, wholly useless without *digestion*.—Every act of sin strangely transforms the soul into its own likeness. Sin, in this, being to the soul, what fire is to combustible matter; it *assimilates* before it *destroys* it.—The *will* embraces what is *evil*; but it is because the *understanding* being perverted, declares it is *good*. One man
gives

gives another a cup of poison, a thing as terrible as death; but at the same time he tells him, that it is a *cordial*; and so he drinks it off, and dies!—An earthly prince may command a man's estate, his body, and his manual services, but it is Christ only who can command his *will*. This is to govern, and this is Christ's prerogative.—Popish writers have anatomized and analyzed every miracle and every metaphor in the gospel till they have even made their religion itself but a *metaphor*, *i. e.* something like religion but *not* religion. A counterfeit faith is worse than counterfeit coin, because infinitely more dangerous when *discovered*.—The gospel came in its grand dispensation on the day of Pentecost, like a great and mighty *wind*, to dry and cleanse a polluted world; like a *fire* to purge and carry off that *dross* which had spread itself all over the inmost regions of *our nature*.—The design of Jesus Christ in the establishment of Christianity, was not to *amuse* the reason of men but to refine their manners, to correct their tempers, to change their nature, to convert the vulture into a dove, and the goat into a sheep. To make the drunkard sober, the wanton chaste, and the covetous liberal; in a word, to make them *new* creatures and excellent persons.—*Opportunity* is the golden spot of time. For, as after such a number of hours, it will unavoidably be night, and there is no *retaining* the setting sun; so after we have passed such a measure of time, our season finds a *period*, we are benighted and must bid adieu to all opportunities and advantages. Then “work while it is called day.” “*Now* is the day of salvation.”—Sinners know not the value of those precious never-returning hours, which they quaff, and revel, and trifle away: remember the recovery of one hour is not to be purchased

fed with all the Persian treasures, or the mines of both the Indies.—*Fear* is a base thing, it enslaves a man's reason; for the most part it proceeds from, and always looks like, *guilt*.—A good minister of Jesus Christ is "A brazen wall" which admits of no cracks, of no flaws; an ungodly minister, is like that made of *baser* materials, of mud and mortar, insincerity and human learning, of a corrupt conscience and a more corrupt conversation; such a wall gapes into chinks and holes, quickly totters and falls, being weak and obnoxious.—Nothing that is *vicious* can be lasting; *vice* is rotten and actually rots and reduces all in whom it prevails.—Whatsoever is *wicked* is also weak. Ezek. x. 3. "Since thou doest these things, how *weak* is thine heart?"—A man should not look for *evidences* of his personal interest in Christ's salvation, in the extent of his *knowledge*, but in his *godliness*. Real grace produces real holiness. An *holy* life is the only infallible demonstration of a *sincere* heart. It is probable, that hell may be paved with the heads of the *knowing* but wicked, and the catalogue of the damned made up of such as *knew* their master's will, and *did it not*.—Those, who can own themselves to be *without sin*, demonstrate to the world that they are without *shame*.—Under-rate the *guilt* of sin, and by degrees the heart of man will be wrought to such a pitch as to *sport* with sin, and to trifle with two things, the most dreadful which can be named, a strict *law* and an infinite *justice*.—The doctrines which both spare the sinner and flatter him too, will generally be received. Witness most of those held by the church of *Rome*: They were introduced by *fraud*, and continued by *force*; and there is either *pleasure* or *profit* at the bottom of almost every one of them.—False doctrine is *false*, whatever reception

reception it may meet with. The impostures of Mahomet have lasted now a thousand years ; and should they last a thousand more, they would be as perfectly untrue as at the first. Age may alter the *circumstances*, but not the *nature* of things.—That preacher who shuts his eyes and seals his lips, where he observes a reigning vice, prevaricates with his profession, and deserves to be removed from it by some remarkable judgment, for being too wise to discharge his duty.—Among the many and various tokens of real friendship, none is more certain than this, a readiness to correct a miscarriage and to point out a fault, seasonably and affectionately. For it is clear, that he who does so, prefers the good of his friend, to his own private *interest*.—Every flatterer by endeavouring to blind the judgment of a man, in so doing, he gives him a fatal wound in the head ; and if the head be crazed and giddy, the actions will be irregular and absurd.—Therefore let the advice given to the soldier be always remembered, Τὴν κεφαλὴν πρύλαξο, secure your *head*.—Flattery uses a man as *Jael* did *Sisera*, it pretends to refresh and entertain him kindly, but designs only to nail his head to the ground.—In some particulars, vice seems to resemble virtue ; the *prodigal* person may seem to be *liberal*, it being very hard to mark the precise point, where liberality ceases and prodigality begins ; and so of many other sins.—Every one who measures his actions by the commendations of the *flatterer*, sets his reputation upon stilts, which is not the surest way of *standing* : and when he comes to be weighed in an impartial balance, he will be found wanting.—A sin of *presumption* is always accompanied with *deliberation* ; it is a sin that goes on gradually, it does, as it were, destroy the soul *soberly*, and with *design*.

—He who presumes to offend, promises himself pardon from God's mercy, without any warrant from God's word.—Every beam of God's favour to a sinner, in *outward* blessings, is a loud call to *repentance*.—Every breath of air which a sinner takes in, is a *respite* from sin-avenging justice; a respite granted by the free and sovereign mercy of God.—For a man *therefore* to sin, because he is *great, rich, and powerful*; that is, in other words, because providence has by all this distinguished goodness obliged him not to sin, is certainly the height of *ingratitude*, as ingratitude is the height of *baseness*.—At the word of God, the *Deist* smiles with contempt. But the word will not be baffled or put off with a contemptuous sneer. Where it finds no *reception* it will be sure to leave a lasting *guilt*; and no man can despise it with *safety*.—The more clearly it informs, *being rejected*, the more clearly it condemns.—They who break through all the mounds and obstacles which God has put between them and the gratification of their vice, imitate *Balaam's* sin, and may expect to inherit his reward.—Let the presuming sinner know, that he who now *warns* by a still small voice, when he comes to judge the sinner, will do it in peals of thunder. He will shortly be revealed in flaming fire, to take vengeance on all them who know not God, and obey not the gospel.—The foundation of *apostacy* appears to be laid in the *diminutive* thoughts men have of sin, their underrating its real *guilt*.—Where *despair* has slain its thousands, *presumption* has slain its tens of thousands.—What herds of men throng in the broad way! Where high mirth and false confidence carry them dancing and laughing into *perdition*!—**PREACHERS**, for God's sake, cry *aloud*! snatch these

these perishing souls from the jaws of ruin.—The corruption of man's heart does actually *abuse* the *mercy* of his maker, and labours to bring the most amiable of attributes to serve the interest of his vile affections.—Satan urges men to *presumptuous* sins, knowing that his design, like a two-edged sword, may chance to cut both ways. For, first, he will make a man *presume* to commit a sin, and then make him *despair* of pardon.—In the first chapter of Ezek. God's *providence*, in the administration of all things here below, is expressed by a wheel full of eyes, to signify God's *quick-sighted* knowledge in his government, and to express also, that those eyes were always in motion.—A man either believes that God *sees* him, or that he does *not*. To believe that he does *not*, is to deny him to be God; to believe that he *does*, and yet commit sin, is to affront him to his face.—*Deeds* always over-balance *words*, and the down-right practice speaks the *mind* more plainly than the fairest and most eloquent profession.—Hope of *concealment* is the greatest inducement to an hypocrite to commit sin. Psalm lxiv. 5. But, surely, it is an ill argument, because sinners do not see God, to conclude, therefore he does not see them!—The greatest wickedness, and that which is most odious to God, is the wickedness of the *heart*.—No tongue can express the infinite multitude of impure thoughts that lodge in a polluted mind! What inexpressible *need* is there for the cleansing *blood* and sanctifying *spirit* of Jesus Christ.—When Satan, secrecy, and every possible advantage, concur to urge on your sin, consider that you have still this company with you; a *conscience* that will *accuse* you, and a *God* that will judge you.—In every action, it is not so properly the beginning, but the *end* that is to

be regarded.—Nothing can be more irrational, than to be dogmatical in things *doubtful*; and positively to determine, where *wise* men only dispute.—Discontent *burns* only that breast in which it boils.—Submission is that which either removes or lightens a burden.—Christian, without *justification*, thou canst have no *security*, and without evidence of that, thou canst have no *comfort*.—There is one thing, and but one thing, really needful. It is not needful that thou shouldest be rich, honourable, or healthy, but it is needful thou shouldest be *saved*.—True it most certainly is, that no single virtue which can be named, is produced in the soul of fallen man, but is *infused* into it by the operation of God's Spirit. This does not preclude our endeavours, as it is *in the use of means* the Holy Spirit is pleased so to operate.—*Flatterers* are a sort of cattle that usually herd in the courts of princes, and the houses of great men. Greedy cattle love rich pastures.—He that flights me himself cannot be my friend, but he that endeavours to make others flight me too, must certainly be my mortal enemy.—Many lift up their eyes to heaven in prayer, and yet fix their *desires* upon earth and its enjoyments, Let such know that it is what the blessed God *abhors*.—The predominant love of glory may produce all those virtuous actions which grace produces in the lives of true christians: But where the motive is *pride* the action is rejected. Many have not goodness enough *to be* religious, who yet have *pride* enough to *appear* so.—Sterling piety lodges in the interior regions of the heart.—He that employs all his actions to promote his *own* glory, has fairly renounced the condition of a creature and a servant; sets up for himself, becomes his own master, and, what is more, his own *god*.—Nothing but

but *grace* can extinguish sin.—The great evangelical virtue, so highly commended, and so strongly urged, and upon which the whole salvation of man depends, is FAITH. This is the great and glorious badge of the citizens of heaven, the sons of God, and heirs of immortality. A saving and effectual faith is wrought in the soul by a sound and real work of conversion.—Were I to define *faith*, and shew what it is, I should say, that it is a durable fixed disposition of holiness, immediately infused by God into the soul, whereby the soul in all its faculties is changed, renewed, and sanctified, and withal powerfully inclined to every virtuous disposition and action.—

Faith is not a mere conviction floating in the understanding, but it is a *living active principle*, wonderfully produced and created in the heart by the almighty-working of God's Spirit; and which does as really move and act a man in the course of his spiritual life, as his very soul does in the course of his natural life: and this is that faith by which we stand, and if ever we are supported against the terrible assaults of our spiritual adversary, it is *this* must support us.—Every good purpose and resolution made in the strength of human wisdom and bare morality, vanish and become extinct before a powerful and pleasing temptation. Christ alone, apprehended by faith, is the strength and security of the believer. Nature has corruption enough to be its own tempter, and if want of grace leaves the door of the heart unguarded, sin needs no other invitation to enter.—As the union of the soul to the body is the cause of natural life, so the union of Christ and the soul is the cause of spiritual life.—Nothing but the Spirit of God, living, reigning, and conquering in the heart, can repulse our grand adversary; an infernal enemy is too power-

ful for any human arm to resist.—There are, doubtless, some temptations, so strong contrived with such admirable *art*, tendered with such particular advantage, and insinuated by such peculiar circumstances, and in addition, pressed with such unceasing importunity, that nothing but the hand of omnipotence can keep them off; nothing but the Spirit of God himself can prevent their fastening upon and overcoming the soul. Let the believer rejoice in that gracious word which assures him that “When the enemy shall come “in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up “a standard against him.”—When God bid the children of Israel go and possess Canaan, he told them that he would send his angel before them, and drive out their enemies. In like manner we go forth against sin and temptations, but Christ must send his Spirit before us to subdue both, or we shall fall and perish in the attempt.—There is no certain refuge for a poor sinner but in Christ, who is the rock of ages; and those are safe who have fled to him, and are now one with him.—Of all beings, God is supremely amiable and desirable: all the beauty and perfection that shines through the universe, are but inferior emanations from the inexhaustible fulness of Jehovah.

POPERY.

The doctrine of *human merit* is one of the principal foundations of *popery*: This is the great *Diana*, for which some of the most experienced *craftsmen* in the world make shrines; and by so doing, get their living, and that a plentiful and sometimes a splendid one too. They know full-well that without *this* doctrine, the grandeur of their church (which is the soul of their religion)

religion) would quickly fall to the ground. For, if there be *no merit* of good works, then, no supererogation; and if no supererogation, no indulgences; and if no indulgences, then it is to be feared that the silversmith's trade would run low, and the credit of the *Pontifical bank* begin to fail; so that the spirit and life of popery lies in a strong attachment to the merit of good works. Now, take away the foundation and the house must fall. Beat down, by force of argument, the doctrine of human merit, and the whole superstructure of Popery must come down, and the sooner the better.

Cardinal Bellarmine, in his fourth book and fifth chapter *De Pontifice Romano*, has this monstrous passage: "That if the *Pope* should, through error, or "mistake, command vices and prohibit virtues, the "church would be bound in conscience to believe "vice good and virtue evil." I shall give you the whole passage in his own words to a tittle: *Fides catholica docet omnem virtutem esse bonam, omne vitium esse malum. Si autem erraret Papa, præcipiendo vitia vel prohibendo virtutes, teneretur Ecclesia credere VITIA ESSE BONA ET VIRTUTES MALAS, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare.* Good God! that any thing that wears the name of a *christian*, or but of a *man*, should venture to own, in the face of all the world such an assertion as *this!* for the iniquity of which no name can be found in all the compass of language. When men of learning and ability give themselves over to the defence of wicked interests and a bad cause, it is just in God to smite the greatest abilities with the greatest insatiation, as in this case and in the case of *Ahitophel*.

Such an ascendant have the Romish casuists over scripture, reason, and morality: much like what is

said of modern *Jews*, that their sense and reason is so besotted, as to hold, that in case two *rabbies* should happen to contradict one-another, they are bound to believe those contrary assertions to be equally certain, and the express word of God! Such an iron-digesting faith do they possess. It is really a pity, that there is no such thing in Judaism as *transubstantiation* for the farther exercise of it.

The leading article in the Romish persuasion, is the Pope's *supremacy*. An article this, so essential to the grandeur of the papacy, that without it the *Pope* himself would not care a rush for all the rest. The very corner-stone of the English reformation was laid in a just renunciation of this point, for which our kings have lain under the papal curse, but God has turned the curse into a blessing.

As to the doctrine of *Infallibility*, we look upon it as a sacrilegious invasion of an attribute which belongs only to God. And we are as little concerned, whether the Pope makes his decrees, and pronounces his decisions in *cathedrâ*, or *extra cathedram*. As no man has any other or better thoughts of a *fox*, while he is in his hole, than when he is out of it.

As to *Transubstantiation*, we reject it as the greatest absurdity that ever was palmed upon the faith of mankind, and as great a depravation of religion as could well be invented. It is the direct cause of *idolatry*, and that of the worst kind, teaching men to give divine worship to a piece of bread. Can a man believe in this absurd doctrine, until he is actually given up to *strong delusion*?

As to *Repentance*, according to their tenets, it is a small and inconsiderable matter. For, placing the very nature of repentance *only* in sorrow for sin, they distinguish this sorrow into two sorts. The first is *contrition*,

contrition, which is a sorrow for sin arising from the apprehension of its natural filth, and its contrariety to the holy nature of God. The other is *attrition*, which is any sorrow or remorse for sin arising from the apprehension of *danger* by sin. Now, though they enjoin the *former*, and recommend it, yet they maintain that a man dying with *attrition*, if attended with confession to the *priest*, and absolution *from him*, will undoubtedly be saved. Does not such a venomous assertion as this open wide the flood-gates to all manner of wickedness? We may lay it down as a certain mark, and a rule of judging from which we should never depart, that whatever doctrine or tenet serves to encourage sloth, idleness, and sin, is perfectly false. *

ERROR.

If a man is to draw a line, it is all one whether he does it by a crooked rule, or by a straight one *misapplied*. He who fixes upon false principles treads upon infirm ground and sinks; and he who fails in his deductions from right principles, stumbles upon firm ground and falls. The disaster is equally injurious in both.

Mistakes are easily made, because the mind of man is weak. Sin has deluded all the faculties, and hence errors of every kind prevail in all places and at all times. So much as the mind deviates from the eternal rules of right reason and morality, so much *dark-*

* What would the Doctor have said to this tenet, "The law is no rule of life to a believer?" He would have reprobated it to all intents and purposes; and, will not every man of *grace*, thus reprobate it?

ness will and actually does prevail. And, so far as darkness prevails the mind will unavoidably pass a false judgment.—Add to this, a *will* that is vitiated and grown out of love with the truth, (as is actually the case with fallen man,) disposes the understanding to error and delusion, by creating and maintaining a rooted *prejudice* against religion and truth. He who considers a thing with prejudice, has judged the cause before he hears it: and decides upon the matter, not as it really is, but as it crosses or agrees to his prepossessioned principles. The understanding, in such a case, is like the eye when it looks at a white object through a red glass. It forms a judgment of the colour, not according to the *thing* it sees, but according to that *by which* it sees.

No man entertains an *error*, but for the time he does so, he is highly pleased and enamoured with it, and often has a more particular tenderness and fondness for a false notion, than for a true one; (as some for a bastard, more than for a legitimate son.) Now error and delusion is the *madness* of the mind: and madness it must be owned, naturally keeps off melancholy, though often *caused* by it. Madness makes men wonderfully charmed with their own extravagancies; and few are out of *humour* in Bedlam, how much soever they are out of their *mind*.

According to the scriptures, a mind informed by *truth*, is a state of *light*; a mind possessed with error, is a state of *darkness*. Now, as nothing in nature is more refreshing than light, so nothing in itself is more dismal than darkness; the scripture makes it the very shadow of death! It is the opportunity for *mischiefs*, and the shelter of *deformity*. Though to want eyes, is indeed a great calamity, yet, to have eyes, and not to see, to have the organs of sight,
and

and the curse of blindness together, this is the summit of human woe. Nothing envenoms a calamity, but the crime which deserves it.

Error and false doctrine is thought too lightly of in the present day. I look upon error as prevailing by gentle *degrees*, and the mind is, as it were, trained up to lesser degrees of falshood, and proceeding from propositions only *suspicious*, to such as are false; and from false to *dangerous*; and at length from dangerous, to downright *destructive*. Hell is a deep place, and there are many steps of descent to the bottom of it. Many obscure vaults to be passed through before we come to utter darkness: But, still the way of error is the way to it. And as surely and naturally as the first dusk and gloom of the evening tends to, and at last ends in the thickest darkness of midnight, so every delusion, sinfully cherished and obstinately persisted in, will in the issue, lodge the sinner in the deepest hell, and the blackest regions of damnation!

TRINITY.

In asserting the doctrine of the *Trinity*, the words of John (1 Epist. v. 7) are directly to our purpose. "There are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." This text contains the doctrine of three distinct divine persons, in one and the same blessed and eternal Godhead.* A doctrine universally

* In regard to the above subject, it may be proper to remark the following things:—1st, That the nature of God is *incomprehensible*. 2dly, Jehovah is what cannot be explained, or illustrated, by any creature in the whole extent of being; there is no fit resemblance of him, nothing to which he may be compared. 3dly, Every objection, therefore

versally received and maintained by the christian church in all ages. The above text is warranted by the testimony of the most ancient, genuine, and unexceptionable records of the new testament; as well as the most noted fathers. And yet under these high advantages of credibility, we see the doctrine has met with considerable opposition both from ancients and moderns. Some question the *authenticity* of the text, and others give up the truth by a false explication.—*Socinians* affirm, that this phrase, *these three are one*, does not necessarily import an unity of *nature*, but only of *consent*. But, were this the true state of the case, where then would be the *mystery*? And we know that, “without controversy, great is the mystery.” If unity of *consent* only were intended, why in all reason was it expressed by *ἐν εἰσι*, that is, they are *one thing, being, or nature*: and not rather by *εἰς τὸ ἐν εἰσι*,

fore, to his being what *creatures* are not, is *impertinent*, and of no force. 4thly, It is unreasonable to object to the truth of a doctrine, merely because of its *mysterious* nature. If mystery be incompatible with reality, no man living can be certain of any thing; no, not of his own existence; much less of the existence of God. For mystery attends matter and mind through every modification. There is no part of creation, but what, to man is mysterious as to its essence, the union of its parts, and its tendency towards and influence upon others. (Is it not so, *Dr. Priestley*? you are a philosopher, and must know.) Yet none will chuse to say, that creatures are more mysterious than the creator. 5thly, In the doctrine we plead for, there is nothing absurd. We do not say God is one, in the same sense in which he is three; nor three, in the same respect in which he is one. 6thly, We do not pretend to believe that of which we have no proper information, nor to understand that of which we have no conception. We believe that there are three persons in our adorable God, because we are so informed by his word: but *how* these three persons subsist in *one essence*, we neither know it, nor believe any thing concerning it; the manner *how* not being revealed.

“Where reason fails with all her powers,

“There *faith* prevails and love adores.”

they

they *agree* in one. As in the next verse, such an unity of concurrence in the spirit, the water, and the blood, is expressed by the same words εἰς τὸ ἓν εἶσι, manifestly importing no identity, or unity of *nature*, or *being*, but only of *agreement* in some certain respect or other; and doubtless in so near a connection of words, if the *sense* had been the same, there can be no reason assigned why the apostle should *vary* the expression.

In Col. ii. 2. the Godhead, imported by τὸ Θεῶν, is expressly applied both to the Father and the Son, in those words τὰ μυστήρια τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. And this, I am sure, is a full confutation of the *Socinians*, and an eternal overthrow of the *Unitarian* system. For these persons (the Socinians) do not deny a plurality of persons in the Godhead, from any hatred to the *number three*, any more than to any other number; but because they absolutely deny there can be any more persons in the godhead than *one*. And, consequently that a *duality*, or *binary* number of persons in it, would, in the judgment of a *Socinian*, pass for an absurdity, equal to that of a *Trinity*.

But it is said, that for the same thing to be declared *three* and *one*, is a manifest contradiction, and reason must conclude it impossible. I answer, that for a thing to be one, in the same respect in which it is three, is a contradiction; but to assert, that which is one in *this* respect, may be three in *another*, is no contradiction.—The Socinians assert boldly, but conclude weakly; and in all their arguments against the Trinity, they prove nothing more than this, that the greatest pretenders to *reason*, are not always the greatest masters of it.

Let it be observed, although there is nothing in reason to *contradict*, yet neither is there any thing to
comprehend

comprehend the glorious mystery. We may as well include a mountain in a mole hill, or take up the ocean in a shell. The mere *revelation* of the truth should satisfy our reason, command our faith, and engage our devotion.

The stress of the point lies here, and let *reason* prove, if it can, that wherever the denomination of *three* is ascribed to any nature, it must necessarily *multiply* that *nature* itself, and not merely its *relations*. Which being so, those who make the article of the *Trinity* parallel to that of *Transubstantiation*, in regard to its contrariety to reason; if they will speak and argue to the purpose, must undertake to prove, that for one infinite being or nature to be in any respect three, without a *triplication* of that nature, and so a loss of its unity, is as repugnant to some known principle of reason, as for that thing, which all my *senses* assure me is a piece of *bread*; is yet, at the same time, a man's body, is contradictory to all those principles by which sense judges of its proper objects. — There is as much difference between the article of the *Trinity* as stated by us, and that of *transubstantiation* as stated by them, as there is between *difficulty* and *contradiction*.

The *Trinity* is a fundamental article of the christian religion. And as he who denies it may lose his *soul*, so he who strives to understand and comprehend it may lose his senses. In *this* matter, the christian's duty is to believe upon the authority of him who has made known the sacred truth. For my own part, since I cannot scientifically comprehend this mystery, I shall bow and worship in humble adoration. And casting down my reason before the incomprehensible truth, receive it with the devotions of silence and awe.

REPREHENSION.

REPREHENSION.

Let a man who reprove an error, do it in meekness, and as commiserating an object deserving compassion. Let the reprehension come, not as a *dart* shot at the offender's *person*, but at his *crime*. Let a man so reprove another as to shew he wishes that he had no cause to do so. Let him pass sentence as a merciful judge would do upon his dear but criminal *son*, *i. e.* with great reluctance and pain of mind.

Nothing is more essential to proper reprehension than good temper and a sound judgment. A good *temper*, for, when the truth must be spoken, yet it should be spoken in *love*. A sound judgment, for a misplaced and injudicious reproof, is always ineffectual, and sometimes injurious. He who should preach condemnation to prodigality and intemperance before a company of *usurers*, what effect will his discourse produce? will it not administer fuel to the fire, and give a fair occasion to them to measure *their piety* by their distance from *the vices* reproved; while in fact, they stand chargeable with *worse*. A man may with as much propriety and hopes of success, *angle* for birds, or lay *lime-twigs* for fish.

Now as in a tree, it is the same sap which rises and spreads itself into all that variety of branches which forms the tree; some straight, some crooked; some of this figure, some of that. So it is the same stock of natural corruption, which shoots forth into all that diversity of vices, which produce such different operations and effects in different persons and tempers. And as it is the principal office of a good judgment, to distinguish and so proportion its applications; so
here

here is the great art of a wise and judicious ministry, first to learn a man's predominant distemper, and then apply a suitable *remedy*. A reproof should be justly suited, affectionately spoken, and well-timed.

Assurance of Faith and its proper Effects.

Assurance is a rarity covered from the inspection of the *world*; a secret which none can know but God and the person who is blessed with it: it is writ in a private character, not to be read by any but the individual conscience, to which the Spirit of God hath vouchsafed to decypher it. Every believer lives upon an inward provision of comfort, to which carnal men are perfect strangers.

To discover whether a man's *confidence* be sound or fallacious, I would advise him very seriously to reflect upon what *effects* are produced by his assurance. This is the best criterion to judge in this matter. Does he find that it begets in him a great tenderness of conscience, lest he should offend? Does his confidence beget great caution and circumspection; great abhorrence of *sin*? And more ardent desires after grace and holiness? If it be *thus*, the man may rest assured that his happy and confident persuasion is no delusion; no, no, it is the certain attestation of God's Spirit, with his spirit, transcribing the decree of heaven upon his heart in the great design of his salvation.—A confident hypocrite may boast of his assurance, and appear to triumph in mercy, and indeed over mercy itself; he may know that there is forgiveness *with God*; but, dying in such circumstances, he shall know that there is no forgiveness for *him*.

Union

Union with Christ by Faith.

Aristotle observes, that union is never perfect between complete natures of a *different* kind. There must be a similarity, a cogeniality that there may be a *union*. Now it is faith wrought in us by the operation of God's Holy Spirit, which denominates us new-creatures. And, which consequently, gives us a spiritual one-ness with Jesus Christ, without which it is no more possible for us to be united to him, than for the *dead* to incorporate with the *living*; for darkness to hold communion with light, or hell with heaven. It is certain that want of a true and lively faith in Jesus Christ, demonstrates clearly that there *is no union* with him; without which union no sin can be really opposed, much less overcome. 'Tis from Christ, and from Christ alone, that *strength* can be derived to subdue the corruptions, the innate and powerful corruptions of our nature. From him alone must be derived an healing virtue for stanching the bloody issue of sin; or, in spite of *our* utmost attention in plastering, mortifying, and dressing of it, it will prove *incurable*. 'Tis from him must come a continual supply of assisting grace, to support and bear up in a course of evangelical obedience; and without *this*, miserable experience will convince us that we are not able to stand. Faith in Jesus Christ, as the great head of the church, engages the assistance of the Holy Spirit on behalf of believers; without whose special influence, it is impossible for the soul to do any thing effectually in point of duty, or to oppose any sin with success. It is through *the Spirit* that we must mortify the deeds of the body, if ever they are mortified. Rom. viii. 13.

Faith in Jesus Christ gives to the believer both a title to the *promises* of God, and power to appropriate them. Promises exceeding great in themselves, and exceeding precious to the persons who enjoy them. By a steady faith in these, believers are strengthened to overcome all their enemies. Strength we have none but what we derive from God: God conveys none but through Christ, and whatever Christ bestows he communicates by the Spirit; and the Spirit works his gracious will generally by the promises. It is in this way that he puts weapons into our hands; and *faith* is properly that spiritual hand in which they are put. How justly are the promises stiled *precious*? Every promise is, indeed, a spring of living water: but then it is water in a *well*, and faith is as a bucket by which it must be drawn up, both for our use and comfort. There is enough in every promise, if apprehended by a lively faith, to enable a christian to look all the powers of hell in the face, and triumphantly defy their utmost rage. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—“*Believe* in the Lord *so* shall ye be established.”*

COVETOUSNESS.

* Nothing is more frequently inculcated in scripture, nothing has been of more leading influence in the whole christian life, than FAITH. Nor is there a theological subject which has been more canvassed and more variously represented by divines. To have a right and suitable notion of this doctrine, is of vast importance to us as ministers and christians. Faith is intimately connected with the favour of God, and all the blessings of his goodness. Such as union with Christ—justification—adoption—communion—sanctification—consolation—and salvation.—*Faith* is particularly concerned, 1st, With the gospel and all its promises.—2dly, With all the graces of the Spirit.—3dly, In receiving benefits from Christ.—4thly, With the christian’s life and walk before God: to the repelling temptations, conflicting with difficulties, overcoming the world, and persevering to the end.

Every

COVETOUSNESS.

Isaiah charges the rulers of Israel (chap. i.) with loving *gifts* and following after *rewards*:—with joining house to house and field to field. Now the usual way of men's doing so, is by their joining sin to

Every renewed soul is endued with the seed or root of true faith, and is therefore *seminally* or *radically* a true christian: though there may be certain impediments in the way as to its actual exercise, as in children, idiots, and madmen.

True faith is the giving credence to the word of God and acting accordingly. It is *such* a belief of those revealed truths as engages the soul in a vigorous pursuit of the objects revealed. Saving faith is, as to its acting, the exertion of the whole rational soul towards God and Christ, as directed and warranted by the word; and that in order to our spiritual union to Christ, and communion with him, and an actual participation of all new-covenant blessings.

Faith being of this complex nature, it is necessary to consider it in relation to the several distinct faculties of the soul—1st, Faith is an act of the *understanding*, and as such includes *knowledge* of the truth, *assent* to it, and *approbation* of it. 2dly, Faith is an act of the *will*: as such it consists in the full extent and bias of the heart towards the good exhibited—in an actual choice of it as necessary, suitable, and pleasant. 3dly, Faith is an act of the *affections*, as it loves and cleaves to the things believed. Faith is *radically* in the understanding, *formally* in the will, and *operatively* in all the warm active powers, called affections. Faith is set forth in scripture as a *choosing*, *coming*, *fleeing* for refuge, and cleaving to Christ. Then for men to say that saving faith consists in a *mere assent* to the word, is a dangerous mistake, tending to presumption and carnal security. 'Tis the duty of every man to believe the gospel. The external word, and not any internal operation, is the *warrant* of true faith and the ground of the duty; although such internal operation be *necessary* to incite and enable the act. Now, if as ministers, we teach that to be saving faith which is *short* of it, we encourage presumption. And, if we assert such things to be *essential* to it as are not, we lay stumbling blocks before the souls of men. May the Lord give to ministers wisdom to discriminate and ability to state and defend the truth as it is in Jesus.

fin, and extortion to extortion. A course equally offensive to God, and grievous to man. *It is no more possible for a nation to flourish, when the wealth of it is grasped in a few hands, than the body should thrive, when the nutriment due to all the parts of it is gathered into two or three SWELLING WENS.* King James justly charged some of his officers with bribery and corruption, because the powder-plot was not *sooner* discovered. Neither the covetous nor the fearful can be trusted. For, the *covetous* will betray us for money, and the *fearful* for their own security.

Covetousness implies a *rapacity* in getting. When men, as it were, with open mouth, fly upon the prey; and catch with that eagerness, as though they could never have enough; so that, had they (as it is fabled of *Briareus*) each of them an hundred hands, they would all of them be employed in *grasping*, but hardly one of them in *giving*; all engaged in *receiving* but not one in *restoring*. A thing in itself so monstrous, that nothing in nature is like it, except *death* and the *grave*. The only things I know, which are always robbing the world and never making restitution. So great and so voracious a prodigy is covetousness, that it will not allow a man to set bounds to his appetite; it impetuously urges him on to *get* more, while he is at a loss for room to bestow, and an heart to enjoy what he already has. “He that maketh *haste* to be rich shall not be innocent.” ’Tis clear that they who do so are not. Many are so determined upon getting *rich*, that neither reason nor religion, duty nor danger, shall impede their progress. The covetous man will often leap over all mounds and fences, break through right and wrong, and even venture his neck in pursuit of his favourite scheme; this, I confess, is *haste* with

a witness. Hence we sometimes see estates, like *mushrooms*, spring up in a night, (no wonder, for arts of the *blackest* nature, gave rise to them) and some who were *begging* or borrowing at the beginning of the year, ready to make *purchases* before the end of it!—Covetousness, by arts with which honest people are not acquainted, will sometimes pour in riches like a torrent or a *land-flood*, which never brings so much plenty where it finally settles, but it does as much mischief *all along* where it has passed.

The guilt of covetousness is aggravated by another evil which God abhors, *i. e. Impatience*. Covetousness grasps at all, and impatience admits of no delay. Scorning to wait God's leisure, and attend to the leadings of his providence; such persons want riches to make to themselves wings, and *fly to them*; however, they may rest assured, that when they do make to themselves wings, they intend to fly *away*.

Look at the cozening, lying, perjured shopkeeper, who will curse himself forty times over to gain two-pence in the pound extraordinary; and sits retailing away heaven and salvation for pence and halfpence; and seldom vends any commodity, but he sells his soul with it, like brown paper into the bargain. We may say of *covetousness*, that it makes both the alpha and omega of the devil's alphabet: it is perhaps the first vice in corrupt nature which lives and the last which dies. † The *infant* reaches out its hand for what it should not have; and oh! who so intent upon the

† Will not the above paragraph well account for the conduct of *Sunday-workers*? Is not covetousness the soul of their activity? In *this* town instead of "*No manner of work*," men do any, and all manner of work on Sundays, as occasion serves and *interest* may dictate.—Reader, is it thus in your town? If so, weep over it, and pray for it.

world, as those who are just going out of it? Who so diligent in heaping up wealth, as those who have neither will nor time to spend it! Of so *killing* a malignity is covetousness, that wherever it settles, it injures materially and destroys everlastingly. If it has enriched its thousands, it has damned its tens of thousands. An *hard* saying I confess! But it is the *truth* of it which makes it so. It was not therefore without good reason that our blessed Lord said to his disciples, "Take heed and beware of *covetousness*."

DANGER of LUXURY.

Prosperity, generally gives birth to, and afterwards cherishes *luxury*. Sodom was a place watered like the garden of God. Gen. xiii. In it there was fulness of bread. Ezek. xvi. There was abundance of all things. This was the condition of Sodom, and what the sin of it was, and the dismal consequence of that sin, is well known. The sin of Israel in committing fornication with the daughters of Moab, which in its consequences reaped down so many thousands, was introduced with feasting and dancing.

We read of nothing like adultery in *David* as a persecuted, tried man. No, in the *wilderness* he fled hither and thither as a chaste roe upon the mountains. But, when he was placed in circumstances of wordly ease and prosperity; reclined on his couch, and sunned himself, on the leads of his *palace*; then, then it was that this great hero fell, fell by a glance of his eye, and buried his glories in his neighbour's bed. By this fall he brought upon his reputation a lasting slur, and to his conscience a fearful wound.—The unclean devil haunts the families of the *rich*, and dwells in rooms of

of state. Only wisdom and grace from above, can preserve a person (as in the case of *Joseph*) pure and sound, in the neighbourhood of such contagion.

What the prophet says of *wine* and *music*, may be said of *prosperity*, the intoxications of which are no way less, that it steals away the *heart*. The man shall find that his heart is gone, though he cannot say the time when. Let the prosperous man seriously consider upon what weak hinges his prosperity and consequent felicity hangs: perhaps a cross accident, the omission of mere ceremony, or the misplacing of a circumstance, may determine all his fortunes in this world: perhaps his whole interest, his possessions, and his hopes too, may all live by the breath of another, who may breathe his last to-morrow. And oh! shall a man forget God and eternity, for that which cannot secure him the reversion of a day's happiness? How quickly is the sun overcast, and how often does he set in a cloud, and that cloud break in a storm. Confidence in a fellow-creature is generally the downfall of a man's happiness; and it is the confident man who is the *deceived* man. And the reason of it may be seen in Jer. xvii.

Men covet wealth, but let them know that all the wealth of both the Indies cannot add one cubit to their stature, either of body or mind: it can neither better their health, improve their intellects, or refine their morals. We see those languish and die who can command the drugs and physicians of a whole kingdom. And some are *dunces* in the midst of magnificent libraries, dull and sottish in the very bosom of *Athens*: many are far from wisdom, who yet lord it over the wise. We should not be so earnest to solicit God for temporal blessings, as for an heart to fit us both for the enjoyment and improvement of

what we have. Let us pray that God may be *choofer*, as well as giver of what we may possess in this world. He only is able to suit and sanctify our condition to us, and us to our condition.

The Enticements of Sin.

When sin entices, it never apprizes the soul of the flaws and defects which interrupt enjoyment. No, it speaks in lofty terms, promises high satisfaction, and raises the expectation to the utmost, until eager desires will admit no objection, and hear no reason. Sin entices by making large proffers, riches, fame, honour, crowns, and kingdoms, but never suffers a man to purchase a true judgment, but at the expence of a disappointment; and then he finds, to his cost, how much he was dazzled and deceived. Stand upon thy guard, christian, and fortify thy mind with this consideration, that sin never entices but with an intention first to *deceive*, and then to *destroy*.

The christian in his proper frame of mind, (upon enticements to the play, the ball, and the race,) will say within himself, “ I *will not* venture into such a company, I will not use such a recreation, I will not go to this *ball*, nor to that *play*, for I know not how my mind may serve me under such circumstances. God may leave me to myself, and my strength may fail me, and my own heart betray me. If I tempt God, by such a bold and heedless venture, he may permit the devil to tempt me, in a manner I am not able to resist; and the serpent may slide into my bosom before I am aware.” A christian will carefully avoid those spiritual pest-houses, where scarce any thing is to be heard or seen, but what tends to the corruption
of

of good manners. And from whence, not one of a thousand returns, but some way contaminated, and more than ever reconciled to *vice*. And, so far, is no inconsiderable point gained by the tempter. All who have any considerable experience of the world, and acquaintance with their own hearts know it full-well. He who has no mind *to trade* with the devil, should be so wise as to keep away from *his shop*. In vain does any man pretend to sincerity in his religion, who voluntarily puts himself into the tempter's way, into the high-road to sin and debauchery. Can any one hate to be *defiled*, and yet handle *pitch*? Abhor all impurity and yet plant himself in the very neighbourhood and confines of it? A sincere heart is a *tender* heart, and feels the least contagious breath that may blow upon it. And this breath has been found by fatal experience, to prevail more at plays, at balls, and taverns, than any where else. It is therefore a bold venture to go near them, "He, as one wisely said, who would not fall into sin must not pass by the door of temptation".

The Glory of Christ in his Exaltation.

Jesus Christ now enjoys universal sovereignty. This is he who is now King of kings and Lord of lords, who sways the sceptre of heaven and earth, and wears the imperial crown of the universe. Heaven is his throne, and the thrones of earthly kings form his footstool. He now shines at the head of the noble army of martyrs, and wearing the trophies of conquered sin and death. He possesses the kingdoms of the world by the two unquestionable titles of *conquest* and *inheritance*. The immortal hosts of angels, and
ministers

ministers of providence are his attendants: they hear his will, and execute his commands with a winged alacrity. Learn, O christian, learn obedience to your Saviour from these vigilant spirits. Every element and the whole retinue of nature are subservient to his pleasure, and are so many various instruments used by him in the accomplishment of his wise purposes. All the stars fight in their courses under his banner, and are subject to the dictates of his will. The heavens rule every thing in the world beneath them by their unsearchable influence, but themselves are ruled by him. He, the Lord of glory, can command nature out of its course, and reverse the great ordinances of heaven. The heathens have been told of an *Atlas* that shouldered up the heavens; but we know that he who supports the heavens, is not under them but *above* them. Believer, this illustrious personage is thy Saviour. Never be ashamed of him, nor afraid to confess him before a scoffing world.—N. B. The august and glorious prophecies and predictions of the old testament were all fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, to whom they all pointed, and in whom they all terminated, as in their utmost period and their only centre. O confide in the arm of his power, and labour to glorify his name.

SELECT

SELECT SENTENCES.*

THE divine *goodness* is a subject too grand to be set forth by our imperfect orations : that which is manifestly over all his works may well be above all our conception and expression.—A corrupt *will* is the direct cause of sinful *actions*.—Nothing cheats a man so much as *groundless* expectation ; it conceives with the air, and grows big with the wind ; and, like a dream, it promises high, and performs nothing. Satan *tempts* only that he may *destroy* ; therefore watch and pray.—Better not to be a man, than to be an *irreligious* man.—Men may flatter themselves upon the ground of natural and acquired excellence, but God will overlook all these and punish them for want of *moral* excellence.—By *sin* the creature renounces his dependance upon the creator ; he sets up for himself ; he devises schemes for his own happiness, and thus apostatizes from God as the supreme good : hence sin is properly defined, *aversio à creatore ad creaturam*. A turning from the creator to the creature.—By reason of sin, the soul is unable to act *spiritually* ; it may act, but cannot act *aright* ; sin has totally disordered the soul, and turned the edge of all its operations against God.—We are in such circumstances by the *fall*, that now we can shew nothing but the *ruins* of our creation.—The Holy Spirit is remarkably full, and at the same time awfully severe, in disclaiming against *pride* ; pride, in every species of it : he appears determined to reduce the lofty looks of men, and to bring down all his arrogant self-esteem ;
Be

* The Editor, to render the work as *useful* as possible, has incorporated some few striking sentences from other great authors.

“ Be clothed with humility.”—If a sinner would dwell upon the serious meditation of his original and actual guilt, he would never apprehend that his *merits* would procure him acceptance with God.—Though as *sinners*, we have cause to dread the tribunal of God’s justice, yet as *penitents* we may confidently approach the throne of his mercy : distressed soul, come freely, and pour all thy complaints into the compassionate bosom of Jesus Christ. Upon thy coming, he will graciously accept thy person and thy petition.—It is not possible for us to have a more pregnant demonstration of a *reconciled* God than what we have, a *sacrificed* son !—It is impossible to divide sorrow from sin, that which *defiles* will certainly *disturb*.—It is a very serious truth that the evil of *sin* is greater than the evil of *pain* ; pain may distress but sin will destroy.—Temptations are highly dangerous, especially to *young* people ; if we dread being caught we shall not be found walking upon the *snare*.—In preferring the world to Jesus Christ men certainly demonstrate that they are not in their right mind ; did ever any man, *in his senses*, prefer brass to gold, or a pebble before a pearl ?—Suspence in the *choice*, is from *indifference* to the object, which, in regard to Jesus Christ, is a fatal indifference indeed !—In a profession of religion, every man’s sincerity is not to be calculated and determined just in the same way ; he, who concludes a man *is pious*, because he is *not covetous*, would produce but a weak argument in his favour ; for, he may be *lustful* or *ambitious*, and the stream be altogether as strong though it runs in another channel.—The ground of a believer’s *triumph* is the *work* of Christ : his warrant to depend upon it, is the *word* of Christ : and his actual dependance is the work of *the Spirit* of Christ.—Without

a *spiritual birth*, it will be as impossible for a man to see God, and rejoice in the brightness of his face, as for an infant *unborn* to see the sun and rejoice in its light.—Affliction is a school in which the believer learns not only to be *wise*, but, in the end, to be *thankful*.—Moments spent in the closet upon *heart-work*, are the golden spots of our time.—God does not usually bless negligent souls with gracious enjoyments.—Formal professors are like the *moon*, they have little light, less heat, and frequent changes.—Self-exalting thoughts always *defile* the soul, and *grieve* the Spirit of God.—If our *hearing* the word of God has not disposed us much to prayer it has done us little or no good.—The scripture says there is but *one* Jehovah, the same scripture says *Christ is* Jehovah; let Socinians reply to this *if* they can.—The knowledge of *persons* is of as great use in the conduct of human life, as the knowledge of things.—The corrupt memory often serves old lusts by furnishing new fuel, and makes old men react the sins of youth.—Many call upon the devil to *take* them, on whom he has a fast hold *already*.—Few men have right apprehensions of life, till the approach of *death* awaken them.—*Intemperance* carries on the ruin of body and soul at once, and *hastens* death, while it makes a man most *unmeet* for it.—Our life in this world is but a short *preface* to a long eternity.—Time slept away and idly spent will make a painful eternity.—It is our duty to improve every dispensation of providence to our advancement in holiness.—The scriptures have pointed out to us no other road to heaven, but *faith in Christ*. It is the natural means, it is the appointed means of christian salvation.—No man should be *compelled* to join in *rites* and ceremonies which he does not approve;
such

such compulsion only can make hypocrites.—The troubles of *time* will have but small weight with him who has a proper view of *eternity*.—Christian communion contributes both to the happiness and the safety of believers.—Those who would be kept from harm, must keep out of *harm's-way*.—None are ruined by the justice of God, but such as *hate* reformation by the grace of God.—In the worst of times there is more cause to complain of an evil *heart*, than of an evil *world*.—Places or conditions are happy or unhappy as God's gracious presence attends us in them.—He that would be little in temptation, let him be much in *prayer*.—It is through Christ we must expect all, from the least drop of water to the immense riches of glory.—We cannot expect too little from fallible men, nor too much from an almighty and infallible God.—It is common for *reprovers* to be unjustly censured as usurpers.—*Solitude* has its temptations as well as company, especially to *uncleannefs*. N. B. *Let young people mark this*, and pray for chastity and preservation.—When we have dispatched our business *abroad*, we must return to that at *home*, nor ever be from it longer than is necessary.—Gratifying *sensual* appetites has ruined thousands.—Frequent *self-denial* will break the force of temptation.—God consults our *benefit*, rather than our *desires*.—We should never think that part of our substance wasted by which God is honoured, whether it be in the *relief* of his poor, or in the *support* of his cause.—*Equivocation* is an inlet to much sin.—There may be *occasion* to go into places of temptation, but a good man will *hasten out of them*.—Christians should do nothing that looks *mean*, or that favours of covetousness.—We should never be ashamed

to own him for a *brother* whom God owns for a *son*.
 —A man would not be so much interrupted in his prayers by worldly thoughts, were not his heart too easily and too much *affected* with the world. — Disputes seldom heal a breach, but *prayer* may. — Our *own will* is the proudest enemy Jesus Christ has on this side of hell. — God must not only help us upon weighty occasions, but in *every act*, from the beginning of the spiritual life to the life of glory, or we cannot be kept from falling. — It is hard to attempt reformation in any one thing without giving offence. — Where Christ and his free grace, are but slightly touched, the door of hope is shewn as through a mist. — The neglect of prayer, is not only sinful in itself, but the sure sign of an unsanctified heart. — The *love* of Christ is the true source of repentance; the true spur to obedience; and the true persuasive to mortification. — It argues weakness to admire *little* things, and stupidity not to admire *great* things. — Prayer is the *task* of a pharisee, but the *privilege* of a Christian. — They who seek salvation by the works of the law, pursue a shadow. — Merely to turn from one set of tenets to another, is not true conversion. — Relating foolish dreams, can make no better than foolish conversation. — Professors of religion should endeavour, by wisdom and love, to remove ill-grounded prejudices conceived against them. — Many are concerned for the *shame* attending sin, who are totally unaffected with its odiousness in the sight of God. — The lot of God's providence, perfectly agrees to the plan of his counsel. — Children that are trained up to do nothing, are likely to be good for nothing. — Things never go well with a child, when the *authority* of the parent runs low. — One sin leads on to many. — *Constancy* is a virtue, but
obstinacy

obstinacy is a vice ; and he is a foolish judge who does not distinguish between them. — Imputed righteousness frees us from hell ; inherent holiness fits us for heaven. — Faith embraces Jesus Christ just as God tenders him in and by the gospel. — Real faith can never be abstracted from a principle of life and obedience ; they are inseparable. — Faith ventures *to* Christ ; faith ventures *on* Christ, and faith ventures *for* Christ, — The *gospel* alone brings light to the mind, peace to the conscience, purity to the affections, and rectitude to the life. — The Marquis of *Vico* used to say, that he preferred one hour's communion with Christ, to all the pleasures of this world. *Query, how many Marquesses are there of the same judgment?* — No man can write *eternity* upon wordly enjoyments. — We should never want a word of *reproof* for sinners, nor a word of *comfort* for saints. It is easier to pass by a temptation than to come out of it. — A *hasty* judgment is commonly a *wrong* one ; be deliberate. — The understanding is nourished by what we *thoroughly* learn by little and little. — Nothing is to be had by a *negligent* hand ; an industrious perseverance may surmount any thing. — A warm heart requires a *cool* head, courage without conduct is like fancy without judgment. — The most *ignorant* are the most negligent of advice, as being equally unable to discern their own folly, or the wisdom of others. — *Think* twice before you speak once, and you will speak twice the better for it. — He who can reply calmly to an *angry* man will surely overcome him. — In disputes men should give soft words and *hard* arguments. — Never *defer* that until to-morrow which you can do to day ; and which is necessary to be done. — Believe not all you hear, nor report all you believe. — Never study to be

be diverting, without being *useful*.—Slight no man for his *meanness*, nor esteem any man for his outward greatness.—He who prays as he ought will endeavour to live as he prays.—Self-righteousness is one of the strongest fortifications of the soul against Christ and the gospel.—Heaven is a place designed for the *sanctified*, not for the unholy.—It is good to be resigned to the will of God, and to live in expectation of adversity.—The *world* and the *church* are widely different, and to *unite* them is a vain attempt. Can light and darkness *agree*?—Ministers who court *worldly* favour are no true ministers of Jesus Christ. If God is our *leader*, we need not doubt the way.—We must *submit* to God but never *dictate* to him. Should a child dictate to his father?—That dispensation which makes against our *temporal* interests, often makes *for* our *spiritual* interests.—A distressed believer on earth shall soon be a glorified believer in heaven.—Faith does not suspend the power of *feeling*, but it suspends the *fears* of sinking.—Unbelief holds fast by the *creature*, faith holds by the *Creator*.—*Unbelief* dismays the heart with fears, prevents exertion, magnifies dangers, multiplies objections, and dishonours God.—There is no despot like the devil, no bondage like sin, no deliverer like Christ.—Other shields defend the body, the shield of *faith* defends the soul.—Many disallow of Christ and they who do, must provide a *Saviour* for themselves.—The words of Christ are *living* words, they *proclaim* life for men, they *convey* life to the soul, and they *preserve* life in the soul.—Ministers should speak with wisdom, affection, courage, faithfulness, and plainness.—A *negligent* hearer is going to destruction.—Hearers that *profit* under the word, hear attentively, humbly, constantly and joyfully.—

H

Prejudice

Prejudice in the mind of a hearer operates as slow poison; his *health* visibly declines.—If a man is out of Christ, *the way*, his danger cannot be described; if he is in Christ, his blessedness cannot be expressed.—*Fancy* paints out pleasing objects and so deludes, *faith* discerns realities and so brings substantial comfort.—We must never sacrifice *truth* for the sake of peace.—Such as are “light in the Lord,” are lights in the *world*, and therefore easily known.—Where forgiveness is enjoyed, *repentance* will be practised.—A soul may be in a pardoned state and yet want a clear *knowledge* of it.—Faith and *assurance* of faith differ as infancy and manhood.—Faith, repentance, pardon and salvation, are connected as links in the same chain.—Salvation is, to a *convinced* soul, what a reviving cordial is to a fainting spirit, or a comfortable meal to a hungry man.—*Salvation* is the most glorious sound that was ever heard from heaven.—Salvation includes freedom for those in bondage, righteousness for the guilty, and blessedness for the miserable.—The conscience must admit no *Lord* but Christ. A true *minister* of Christ is a friend, a brother, a father.—They know but little of religion who make light of *faith*. According to the scripture, it is by *faith* that men are justified, purified, enabled to stand, and and are finally saved.—A crucified Saviour is the only hope of a believer, his triumphant boast, the very life of his soul, the sinews of his strength, and the spring-head of all his joys.—The true believer is a blessing to others, to the *family* in which he dwells, to the *church* of which he is a member, and to the *country* of which he is a citizen.—If the *Saviour* hides his face, our prospects are beclouded, our evidences are darkened, our footsteps falter, our spirits

spirits droop, and our songs are turned into lamentations.—Christians need *chastisement* to preserve them from carnal security, and to quicken their attention to God, and the great things of *eternity*.—In health we should *prepare* for sickness, it is just at hand.—God's *presence* is the life of ordinances, the spring of every grace, the glory of the church, the strength of the ministry, and the bliss of angels.—An unthankful heart is an ungracious heart.—The way of sin is *natural* and therefore easy.—A light, trifling, and ungodly *minister*, is a walking pestilence!—Some men might be useful as *statesmen*, who are useless as ministers.—*The eternal God* is an eternal spring of consolation to believers, an eternal terror to the wicked, an eternal security to all who trust in him.—*Holiness* is the perfection of the Deity, the beauty of angels, the envy of devils, and the glory of saints.—Such as pursue *sin* crucify Christ afresh.—If a man is not brought to God *here*, he certainly will be banished from him hereafter.—*Faith* in a crucified and risen Saviour will do wonders, it will sheath the sword of divine *justice*; still the clamours of the *law*; silence an accusing *conscience*, and animate the soul to love and *obedience*.—A man must submit to be saved by *grace*, if ever he be saved at all.—*Sin* awakens the wrath of God, brings down the curse of the law, prepares a place of torment, and fits a man for everlasting burnings!—The *cure* of sin takes in a new birth by the Spirit, a sight of Christ suffering for sin, the love of Christ made known to the heart, and a sense of the beauty there is in holiness.—Devotedness to the *world* is opposition to God.—The bible is neglected, prayer omitted, and christian conversation ridiculed, because men do *not savour* the things which are of

God.—The operation of *grace* is admirable, it softens the hard heart, expands the covetous heart, warms the cold heart, and subdues the stubborn heart.—Coming to Christ is the only sure way for a distressed soul to obtain relief.—Coming daily to Christ is the only way to maintain communion with him.—True religion is heart-work, and they who look most to their own hearts will have least to say about *other* people.—A heart which is *right* with God, is set against sin, is united to Christ, is warm with zeal, and is steadfast in the truth.—The law condemns for sin, the gospel justifies through Christ: the law wounds the conscience, the gospel heals it.—A man who *surely* returns from sin is surely pardoned through Christ.—Man has sustained awful injury by the *fall*; now, his *will* is obstinate, his *conscience* is benumbed, his *passions* are irregular, his *affections* are depraved, and his *understanding* is beclouded.—A free *pardon*, through the blood of Christ is necessary to a happy death.—The man who *dies* in *sin* must sink in sorrow.—The way to be refreshed, is to make daily and constant application to Jesus Christ as the fountain of life.—Men of the *world* are enemies to God, despisers of godliness, strangers to the gospel, and out of their right mind.—Many talk about Christ as a foundation, who never *build* upon that foundation.—Gracious drawings in time, are the sure effects of *eternal love*.—The *love* of God is treasure sufficient, when all beside is lost.—Few are so ingenuous as to acknowledge the force of divine truth, and yield to conviction, therefore they mostly endeavour to justify their *own conduct*, and condemn that religion which condemns them.—To *know* God aright, there must be a *disposition* suited to the object.

—Whatever

—Whatever evidence we may have besides, if we have not an *experimental* proof that the things recorded in the scriptures are true, we shall be no gainers by christianity. —To resemble God, and to enjoy him, is the highest state of *excellence* to which we can be exalted in time or eternity. —The smallest degree of *coercion*, merely on account of religion, is *persecution*. —The sons of God ought not to walk like the children of men, but in a manner *worthy* their dignity. —Adoption gives a *title* to heaven, sanctification gives a *meetness* for it. —*Sensual pleasures* allure the heart and deceive the expectation, they poison the affections and darken the understanding. —*Sinner*, what are the pleasures of time to the torments of eternity? —*Christian*, what are sufferings of time compared with the joys of eternity? —True *faith* leads the soul to the word of God for instruction, to the Son of God for salvation, to the Spirit of God for sanctification, and to God himself as an everlasting portion. —Where Jesus Christ is precious to the soul, his ordinances, his word, and his people are so too. —One sin *stained* the human race. —Such as refuse to hear *God*, can never be made wise by men. —Such as hearken to God in life will never repent it in *death*. —Neglect of *consideration* first starves the mind and then destroys the soul. —Regeneration and sanctification recovers and beautifies the soul. —A burdened *conscience* is much worse than a burdened back. —A luke-warm professor is a blot and a discredit to religion. —Fellowship with *Jesus Christ* is truly honourable, highly beneficial, and eternally glorious. —*Sickness* may prevent sin in the life, but cannot of itself cure it in the heart. —Reader, if you never seek those things which are above, you will lose them for ever! —It is madness to chuse the

world for our portion, because we shall presently leave it, and if not, still it is to be *burnt* up before long!—Such as properly value the blessings of *peace*, will beware how they create disturbance.—True peace of *conscience* is a jewel of inestimable value, but the *sinner's* peace is a fatal security.—He, who consecrates his ear to God shall have his understanding improved.—The man who will not hear God now, shall be *made* to hear him another day.—As a nation, we have more reason to fear our *sins* than our enemies.—Some people's religion and their compliments exactly agree, that is to say, there is *nothing* in either.—*Trust* in God, is a comprehensive word; and includes knowledge, faith, prayer, hope, and patience.—He who will not be won by the *goodness* of God, must die under the *wrath* of God.—We may see in a *crucified* Saviour, the evil of *sin*, the *justice* of God, and the *remedy* for sinners.—To encourage a *slave-trade* is a blot to any legislature, and an eternal disgrace to any nation.—If men do not love *the truth*, it is because they have not seen its beauty nor felt its power.—Where the *heart* is wrong the head cannot be right (in a proper sense;) and if a man dies before his heart is made right with God, that man had better never been born.—To a broken-hearted sinner, the *compassion* of God is sweet beyond expression.—We should not take a single step without consulting with and calling upon God.—A man cannot be in the path of duty when he goes to *hear* where he is convinced *the truth* is not delivered.—A hearer must have some degree of light in his understanding, before he *can* judge of a preacher; however the *sheep* of Christ will not follow a stranger.—All who neglect and despise the service of God actually belong to the devil.—Men are by
nature

nature ungodly, they have no fear of God, no faith in God, no love to God, no communion with God, no desires after God, nor any expectations from God.

—The knowledge of a man's condition by nature is necessary to his salvation by grace.—As Jesus Christ died for sin, we ought to die *to* sin.—A preacher who would be useful, must study *himself* much, the *word* more, and *Jesus Christ* most.—God is the

centre of all blessedness, the life of the soul, the lamp of the mind, the joy of angels, and the glory of heaven.

—They can have no pleasure in heaven *with* God, whose principal delight was to live in a world *without* God.—Without a *new* nature, we are no more able

to understand, or enjoy God, or the pleasures of heaven, than a *bat* is to comprehend and take pleasure in a mathematician's lines, or a philosopher's books.—A man may be wise in knowledge and a fool in *improvement*.—There must be a *new* gospel be-

fore any man can be saved without a new nature.—The *promises* of God may well encourage the fainting soul, because they are so suitable, so large, so precious, so free, and so faithful.—Discouragements in the way, are no proof that a man is wrong.—

A *wicked* man is grievously possessed, is a nuisance to society, a blot in the creation, unfit for the service of God, consequently, unfit for heaven, and must be sent to hell.—The nearer a man lives to Christ, the more diligent will he be for Christ.—A good man will consecrate himself and his property to Jesus Christ, but some *rich* professors act very mean.—

There can be no perfect *neuters* in the world, a man is either for Christ, or he is against him.—The *love of Christ* expands the powers of the mind, dilates the heart, sweetens the temper, and produces a holy tranquility.—Goodness abused will increase a man's

perdi-

perdition.—Love to and admiration of the Lord Jesus Christ is a better preparation for the Lord's supper, than reading over a week's preparation book.—Every man's family should be a christian church in miniature.—The blood of Christ is the only foundation of a sinner's hope; and he who thinks lightly of that blood is yet in his sins.—Duties are the delight of a christian but not his *trust*.—The eye of the soul was blinded by sin and can be restored only by *Christ*.—No man on earth, no devil in hell, can curse whom God resolves to *bless*.—God, as a reconciled God in Christ, is the most glorious and engaging object for *meditation*.—*Thoughtless* souls are lost souls.—The favour of God does not exclude trouble from the christian: trials are necessary.—He who sustains the conflict long, and eventually conquers by faith and prayer, is a greater *hero* than Alexander.—That man who is ashamed of *prayer*, has much more reason to be ashamed of himself.—A *legal spirit* saps the foundation of the gospel, eclipses the glory of grace, and overturns the plan of salvation.—Ignorance of Jesus Christ is one of the strongest bulwarks of Satan's kingdom.—To understand the *priestly* office of Jesus Christ is a necessary qualification for the Lord's supper.—The sensible presence of God, will animate the christian in his way more than a thousand amusements.—Christian, the more you *rise* towards God, the more heavenly you will be.—We must not substitute any thing in the room of Christ, nor add any one thing to him; he is, in and of himself, *sufficient* for our salvation.—A sinner has no fears, because he does not see his danger; he has no spiritual sensations, because his heart is hard as a stone.—God's people may be *known* from others, by the objects which they pursue;

pursue; the maxims which they adopt, and by the company which they keep.—Believer, the eye of God's providence is ever awake for thee, for thy defence and thy support.—The more a man *knows* of Jesus Christ the more he will trust him.—Faith realizes invisible things, and is itself only visible by its effects.—Drunkenness can do a man no good, and may do him much harm.—In the world, snares and enticements are so many, that no christian can stand but by watchfulness and prayer.—The believer is dead to the *law*; he is dead to its conditions, dead to its threatenings, dead to its promises; but *not* dead to its precepts.—Believers delight in the law of God, but *rely* upon the Saviour alone.—Beholding Christ, coming to him, and living to him, is the alpha and omega of religion.—One saving *view of Christ* will ease a burdened heart, will heal a wounded conscience, silence an accusing devil, inspire with holy joy, and eclipse the glory of the world.—To seek justification by the works of the law, is to dig for water in a burning mountain.—Faith in Christ, and life from Christ is the essence of vital godliness.—Good works may justify our *faith* but cannot justify our persons.—Neglected warnings will sting the conscience another day.—The *gout* is a dangerous evil, as it gains upon the constitution, but *sin* is much more so.—The earlier a man applies to Christ, the good physician, the better.—*Oppression* is no small crime, whether a prince oppresses his subjects, or a master his servants.—The *office* of the SPIRIT is, to illuminate the mind, to regenerate the heart, to implant holy principles, to open and apply the scriptures, reveal the precious things of Christ, to strengthen the soul, enable it to pray, and seal and confirm it to the end.
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—The sins of men procure God's threatenings, and their own destruction.—If a falsehood comes recommended to the soul with any advantage, that is to say with *agreeableness*, though without *argument*, it is ten to one but it enters and takes possession; and when once the poison is infused, let a man get it out how he can.—He who will not patiently investigate a truth, is never likely to have his mind clearly informed, or his affections fully engaged to it.—If a man could but be brought to look upon the *agenda* of christianity as *suitable* and *agreeable* to himself, he would never judge the *credenda* of it irrational.—*Riches* have made more covetous, than covetousness has made rich.—There cannot be a greater plague, than to be always baited with the importunities of a growing appetite; a beggar at the *heels* is troublesome, but a beggar in the *heart* is much more so.—A bare competence will answer all the necessities of nature, and where a competence is *sufficient*, an abundance cannot be *necessary*.—Contentment is the certain gift of heaven; and not the mere effect of any thing upon earth.—Happiness and comfort stream from God himself, as light issues from the sun.—If neither *riches* can make a man happy, nor covetousness make him *rich*, all pleas for it must needs be torn up by the roots.—Whatever a man accounts his chief good, and which engrosses all his care, that he deifies and adores; that is his god, whether he knows so much or no.—How high is *reason*, and how strong is *love*! and surely God never gave the soul too such wings, that we might creep upon the *ground*, and place our heart and our feet upon the same level.—The good providence of God, so over-rules matters often, that in great villanies there is such a mixture of the *fool*, as quite

quite spoils the project of the *knave*.—Names, however specious, never do, nor can alter things, but ill things will, in the issue, disgrace the best names. —It is satan's method first to draw men into sin and then damn them for it.—The same divine commission which enjoins a minister to *instruct*, commands him to *reprove*; and there is no condition under heaven which can warrant a man to sin without reproof.—When a *Governour*, by his mismanagement, oppression, and wickedness, comes to be generally *hated*, he is not many steps from being most assuredly *ruined*.—Virtue and honour, are such inseparable companions, that the heathens would admit no man into the temple of *honour*, who did not pass to it through the temple of *virtue*.—Virtue is the high-road to honour, and no man ever robs or murders upon *that* road.—Princes may confer names and titles of honour, but *tempers* and *actions* alone can render a man truly honourable.—It is the height of injustice for any man to affect generosity, when it is at other men's cost.—There is enough in man to *need* mercy but nothing to *deserve* it; but the compassion of God is such that it removes all obstacles, answers all objections, and is sovereign, absolute, and free.—Of all the devil's engines, that of a *purposed, future repentance*, is the principal and the most effectual to answer his infernal end; and, I dare affirm, has sent more souls to hell, than any one thing else whatever.—Error, and a wicked disposition, will draw poison out of any thing, and convert the richest cordials of the gospel into gall and hemlock.—The wisest man living is not wise enough to chuse for himself; and therefore we have sufficient cause to fly to an infinite *wisdom*, to direct our prayers, as well as to an infinite *goodness* to supply our wants.

Temptation

—Temptation first finds a man evil, and then makes him *worse*. —As temptation brings a man into sin, so *sin* itself brings him into temptation. —God strikes many in their *temporal* concerns, on purpose to promote their *spiritual* and best interests. —The strongest *temptations* to sin are no warrants to sin. —Such as faithfully depend upon the Lord Jesus, shall certainly be delivered by him. —In every difficult enterprize, *action* must begin the work, *courage* must carry it on, and *perseverance* must complete it. —It is seldom that a temptation fastens to any effect, but in the strength of some one or other of our *passions*. —Present prayer is a certain guard against present temptation. —Prayer not assisted by *practice*, is laziness, and contradicted by practice is hypocrisy. —Some ruin their souls by *neglecting* prayer; and some, perhaps, injure them as much by *adoring* it, and by placing their whole confidence in their prayers, they commit an odd kind of idolatry, and make a god of their very devotions. —It is a known truth that the miseries which befall a man in this life, break in upon him as through the door of *sin*. —God only who *made* the soul is fit to be *trusted* with its great concerns. —The very *expectation* of heavenly things, if rational and *well grounded*, affords more solid happiness than the possession of earthly riches, or the enjoyment of earthly pleasures can possibly afford. —He who does not repent *continually*, never yet repented at all. —Repentance has a sort of double aspect, looking upon things past with a *weeping eye*, and upon the future with a *watchful eye*. —A christian should always stand in a posture of attention and caution. —Every man living, has in his very nature, the seeds of all impurity. —It is less difficult to prevent the *beginning*, than to restrain the *progress*

progreſs of ſin.—There is no conqueſt to be had over ſin but by *grace*.—Satan will tempt us either to *neglect* our repentance, or to *adore* it, to neglect duty, or to rely upon it, either way his turn is ſerved. —Nothing can *cleanſe* the ſoul but that blood which *redeemed* it.—No hope can give us a *title* to heaven, but ſuch, as by its operation, gives us a *ſiſneſs* for it. It is indeed a bleſſed thing to ſee God, but it is ſo only to the *pure in heart*.—Where there is a relation to God, there will be a *reſemblance* to him. —It is infinitely preſumptuous in a man to hope that he ſhall inherit that eſtate, to which he can ſhew *no title*.

FLATTERY.

To publiſh a man's defects and failings to *others*, is malice: but to declare them to himſelf, is friendſhip and ſincerity. To do ſo is to rouse him from ſleep when his houſe is on fire, and to give him timely warning of a diſtemper which may prove mortal. But flattery betrays a man to his ruin. It will never ſee a fault, and if it does it will be ſure not to reprove it. This temper of all others, is the moſt baſe and unchriſtian. It declares the man who poſſeſſes it, to be totally unconcerned about the miſery and welfare of his brother. Such an one as will not put himſelf to the expence of a *word*, to recover a perishing ſoul from the mouth of ruin and perdition; where are his bowels of compaſſion? The flatterer is a *monſter* in nature.

WORK of the SPIRIT.

For a man to have (and every true chriſtian has) an ear to hear, and an heart to perceive, is to have a
true

true spiritual light introduced into the mind by an immediate over-powering (or effectual) work of the Holy Ghost: by which alone the soul is *enabled* to apprehend and discern the things of God *spiritually*, and to practise them *effectually*. And without *this*, we may see and see, and never perceive; and hear again and again and never understand. Christ may discourse with us, as he did with his disciples going to *Emmaus*, and yet our eyes may be held in such darkness, as not to discern him. For the *natural* man cannot, while he remains a natural man, apprehend these things, because they are spiritually discerned. And the reason of this is clear even from nature; because in order to apprehension, there must be a peculiar suitableness between the object and the faculty: things *sensible* must be apprehended by sense; things *intelligible* by the understanding; and so things *spiritual* by some spiritual principle inspired from above.

The Holy Ghost inhabits the church as the soul inhabits the natural body. As the soul actuates the body, in all its various members, and performs an infinite variety of operations, so the Holy Ghost, by an unremitting energy, animates and actuates the members of Christ's mystical body. All the light of knowledge, and all the fire of grace, are wholly from him.

Quench not the SPIRIT.

This admonition of the apostle, is certainly, a solemn and important admonition to *professors*. And it is clear from hence that the Spirit *may* be quenched; and, if so, it will be our prudence to avoid, with assiduous care, such courses and ways whereby he may be quenched; that is, as to his enlightening, comforting,

comforting, and gracious influences. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption." Remember, it is this Spirit alone which can stand by you in the conflict, and comfort you in the dark and disconsolate hour. If he depart, who can resolve your painful doubts, or suspend the misgivings of your trembling conscience? Who shall subdue the innate power of corruption, warn of the arrows of the enemy, or screen you from the fire and force of temptation? Professors, I intreat and advise you, as you desire to enjoy the comforts of the Spirit, as you desire the salvation of your precious souls, as you wish to enjoy peace and tranquility of mind, as you desire the presence of God here, and to behold his face with joy hereafter, grieve not, quench not the Holy Spirit.

INDWELLING SIN.

After the Israelites were in actual possession of Canaan, they had many enemies to conquer and drive out before them. So every christian has corrupt and sinful habits which have overspread and engarrisoned themselves in the inmost parts of the soul. Habits and principles deeply fixed, and therefore not easily dispossessed. These are the enemies he is to encounter, and with which he is to wage war perpetually. Herein he enters a contest with enemies which have every possible advantage against him. He must make his way to them through his own heart. He must open his own bosom to let the weapon reach them. The most painful and yet the most important part of a christian's duty is the mortification of sin. This is weeding, not a man's garden, but his heart. He will find

find that inbred corruption is a sort of growing evil. An evil, that by a deplorable fertility of the soil, will sprout after cutting and suppressing. Scarce any weed is fetched up at once. The gardener's hand and hook, and his eye too, must be constantly watching over it, and labouring to eradicate it. Ah! christian keep close to this work.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

Let no person exclude himself from the number of sincere converts, merely because he never felt those amazing pangs, and those violent terrors of mind which some have experienced. For, though God is pleased, in the unsearchable counsels of his wisdom, sometimes to suffer inconceivable terrors to accompany convictions of sin: yet, such *degrees* of terror are not necessary to make true saints. God knows the best method of bringing lost sinners to himself, and what he finds necessary for one he does not always find *fit* for another. No more trouble for sin is absolutely necessary to salvation, than so much as effectually takes a man off from sin, and brings him heavy-laden to the Saviour. The man who fears that he is not troubled *enough* for his sins, gives a direct proof that he is not in love with them. Let the believer, whose convictions have been mild, acknowledge the goodness of God towards him, and not repine against the great physician, for having cured him by easy and gentle methods. It is the same covenant God who speaks to some in all the terrors of an earthquake, and to others in a small still voice. The overwhelming torrent, and the gentle showers descend, equally from above.

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Our grand adversary will either allure to presumption, or drive us to despair. If, in a way of fatherly chastisement, God bows down the soul, this enemy will trample upon it. He will aggravate the guilt of sin to the utmost. Every backsliding shall be, in his way of reckoning, total apostacy. Every act of sin against light in the mind, according to his dark misrepresentation, shall be the sin against the Holy Ghost. Whatever the soul may plead, Satan will retort the argument against *itself*. If the soul shall plead former assurance of God's favour, he will reply it was all a *delusion*. If it pleads *repentance*, Satan will urge, it was partial or feigned. If it pleads the abundant redemption which is in Jesus Christ, Satan will reply, but that redemption is not for you. In this way, and by such like methods, he will distress and harass a poor soul, and reduce it to the utmost extremity. However, let not the tried christian, give up all for lost, "though darkness endure for a night, light shall certainly come in the morning." Wait patiently, drooping desponding soul, and he who will come shall come; come with all the blessings of life and immortality; pardon and peace; righteousness and joy. The Lord suffers distress of mind to befall the christian at times and seasons, on purpose to imbitter *sin* to him, the cause of all distress. The soldier cannot but remember the battle, who is frequently looking upon his *scars*. The christian will often reflect and say within himself, "this is that sin which procured my Saviour's agony and nailed him to the accursed tree! This is that sin which cost me such bitter groans, and so many distracting fears about the safety of my condition. And, after all this, shall I look upon that very sin with approbation, and wish to commit it over again? Oh! my soul, abhor

the thought! Shall I take that fire into my bosom, which scorched my conscience and had like to have consumed me? Shall I again parley with that serpent which has so often beguiled me? Preposterous folly! Rather let me exercise a double watch, and take my steps with trembling anxiety." Distress arises from sin and Satan: comfort is derived from Christ and the gospel.

Omnipotence the Believer's Security.

The discoveries and the displays of divine power in Egypt in favour of the children of Israel, have been an everlasting encouragement to the church and people of God. Never, since the creation of the world, did omnipotence display its terrifying glories as in the miracles wrought, and the wonders which were performed in *Egypt*. Miracle followed miracle, till at length, in spite of power and malice combined, the armies of Israel were brought out free and victorious. They were delivered from the iron-grinding jaws of a long, a cruel, and an insupportable bondage. "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" No, all things are alike easy to him. And, that all the world may see, that the hand of divine power is not shortened, nor the bowels of divine goodness shut up, succeeding ages have produced numerous and various instances of help and deliverance in regard to the church and people of God. Many a time, when every human help hath failed, God hath eminently appeared, and made his own arm conspicuous and glorious. Believer, look to the *power*, and learn to confide in the faithfulness of him who loved the church and gave himself for it. He is mighty, and therefore, able to save to the uttermost.

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The province and work of a Gospel Minister.

A preacher of Jesus Christ in dispensing the fundamental truths of the gospel, both in regard to *faith* and *practice*, must, as the matter shall require, add illustration to the one, and enforcement to the other. Devising and using arguments to persuade, or to terrify the sleeping conscience, as sound wisdom shall dictate; addressing himself to the desponding souls with gospel *lenitives*; and to the obstinate with legal corrosives, as by the law is the knowledge of sin. And, as the genius and capacity may differ, by all means to address himself to the poor and illiterate in the most plain and familiar stile. And, whatever important truth is opposed, to discuss and vindicate that truth in a courageous and masterly manner.

Every power and gift should be assiduously improved by the preacher. If he would be *useful* in his day, and improve his talents as he ought, he will find no time for idle sports and foolish pastimes. I am confidently persuaded, that there is no endowment, no natural gift whatever, with which the great Father of Lights has furnished the mind of man, but may in its highest operations, be sanctified and rendered subservient to the great work of the ministry. Real piety engages no man, particularly no *minister*, to be dull, to lounge, and to be indolent: but, on the contrary, it stirs up all the active powers of the soul in designing and bringing about great and valuable ends.

It is not enough for a man to have books in his *study*, or his divinity in his pocket, (which many have who have none elsewhere) but he must master his theological principles, till, by the grace of God,

they incorporate with the very texture of his mind. Thus he will be able to use them to effect upon all occasions. And, not when some difficulty is proposed, tamely say that he will consult such and such an author. This is not to be a *divine*, who is rather a walking *library*, than a walking *index*. I do insist upon it there must be a *store within*, a sort of inexhaustible treasure, or a minister will become bankrupt in divinity. And, having run the rounds of a beaten tract, an exhausted common-place, be forced to stand still, or go the same round over again. Pretending to his auditors, that it is profitable for *them* to hear the *same* truths often inculcated upon them; though I humbly conceive, that to inculcate the same truths, is not of necessity to repeat the *same words*. And, therefore, to avoid such beggarly pretences, there *must be* an habitual and abiding preparation for the work.

Some ministers are so negligent of all improvement, and at the same time so light and gay, as manifestly proves to all the world, that they are more fit for the *stage* than for the *pulpit*. The sacred employment of the sanctuary is not at all congenial to their minds. One is almost tempted to enquire, are these men in their right mind? For is it possible for a man to be merry and jocular, whose grand business it is to treat of eternal *life* and eternal *death*!!! There may be, and it is clear there often is light *wit*, where there is no solid *wisdom*.

The eternal salvation and perdition of souls are things of the greatest possible consequence. They are not things to be treated of with jests and witticisms, and the man who thinks to furnish himself out of *plays* and *romances*, with language for the pulpit, betrays an ignorance enough to make an angel blush:
and

and demonstrates to all the world, as was hinted before, that he is more fit for a *player* than he is for a *preacher*. And indeed, many play with preaching, but then, it is *their benefit*.——The apostles told the world in plain terms, that “he who believed should be saved, and that he who believed not should be damned.” This was a dialect, and these were words which pierced through and through the conscience, and made their hearers cry out, “Men and brethren what shall we do?” Their elegant orations did not tickle the ear, but their serious discourses penetrated their hearts, the very design of preaching. Leave the *heart* untouched, and you do nothing. When men came from such sermons, they did not, (like *modern* hearers) merely admire and commend the preacher, the elegance of his diction, the harmony of his periods, and the propriety of his gestures; (the sum total of all excellence in many *modern* preachers!) but they appeared and spoke as men conquered by the overpowering force of *truth*; much in the words of the disciples going to Emmaus, “Did not our heart burn within us, while he opened to us the scriptures?”

As ministers, we do well to bear it in mind for our own consolation and encouragement, that while the work of preaching the gospel continues in the world, the *Spirit* will never be wanting to the faithful preachers of it, in a suitable and gracious assistance of them in their all-important work. I do not say in the same *extraordinary* manner as with the apostles. Their work being extraordinary, it was necessary that their assistance should be so too.

Many men do not openly preach even what they know and believe, because they are *afraid* of giving offence. But such as engage themselves in the cause of truth, must

expect, and therefore should prepare for, the natural and certain consequence, *i. e.* mortal hatred from the world. The christian ministry is as little regarded, in general, as men regard their souls.—The apostles and ministers of Christ were looked upon as the very off-scouring of the world, and were trampled upon accordingly. They were scarce ever mentioned but with slander, or so much as spoken to but with sarcasm and invective. They were perpetually railed at as deceivers and imposters, at the very time they were labouring to undeceive the world. In a word, they were like physicians exchanging cures for curses. They were reviled and abused by their froward patients; and that, at a time, when they were doing every thing that could be done, for their health and recovery — Nothing can more unfit a man for the work and office of an apostle or minister than *fear*. He who fears his enemy, gives that enemy every advantage. *Power* on the one hand, and *interest* on the other, will soon form such an one into a mere statue, a timid silence will close his lips; and his fears will produce in his conduct the meanest compliances: he will *bend* like an osier.

Jesus Christ never exerted his power more to the full proof of his Godhead, than when he made fishermen to silence philosophers; weakness and poverty to brave it over the whole Roman empire, the decrees of senates and the force of legions. And all that by the fairest and most simple kind of violence which we can possibly imagine; namely, binding their hands by penetrating their consciences and sliding into their hearts.

THE

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

This blessed ordinance is not first designed to *make* us holy, but rather supposes us to be so. It is not so properly a converting as a confirming ordinance. It is intended for spiritual *food*, and as all food presupposes a principle of *life* in him who receives it, and he receives it to support and preserve that life; so the Lord's supper is originally intended to preserve and maintain that spiritual life which we receive in regeneration, and which is evident to others by a thorough conversion. According to this, men should not expect life but *growth* by it. It is highly improper for any one who is not passed from death unto life, and hath not in him a new and living principle, to come to this spiritual repast? *

PURITY OF HEART.

A single eye, or purity of intention, does not consist in, nor is it proved by any *external* performances, however moral or religious. Heart purity consists properly in an *inward change* effected by the operation of the Holy Spirit. When this change takes place, a certain principle of grace is actually infused, whereby the man is made a partaker of the divine nature†. Hereby the man is influenced and *disposed* to whatsoever things are pure, lovely and of good report. This principle is not a certain something born, or brought into the world with us, nor yet reared upon

* If so, what would the doctor have said to ungodly men who receive the ordinance *merely* as a qualification for a *civil* office?

† 2 Pet. i. 4.

the stock of *nature* by any art, industry or cultivation of our own. No, it is, and must be, the production of an almighty, a *creating* agent. * If a man is not *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works he never will, and considered as a *fallen* creature, he never can perform them acceptably and in a right manner. "So, then, they that are in the flesh cannot *please* God." Reader, have you ever duly weighed this matter; and conscious of your inability, applied to the Son of God for

* Here the doctor expresses succinctly but clearly, the nature and doctrine of *regeneration*. To which I beg leave to subjoin the following note, and the more so, as in the next paragraph the doctor seems to conjoin regeneration and conversion; and indeed, they are inseparably connected in every adult believer.—*Regeneration* is a powerful change, wrought in the soul by the Spirit, wherein a vital principle, a new habit, the law of God, and a divine nature are put into the heart, enabling it to act holily and well-pleasing in the sight of God, and to grow up therein to eternal glory. This is included in the terms, *regeneration*, *new-creature*. There is a change, a creation; that which was not, is brought into being. If a new-creature and in Christ, then surely not a *dead* but a living creature. And if a living creature, then possessed of power to act, and habits to make those actions easy. And, if a power to act and a habit to facilitate that act, then a law in their nature to rule their actions. In the new-creature produced there is a *likeness* to God. Hence it is called the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.

Regeneration differs from *conversion*. The former is a spiritual *change*, the latter is a spiritual *motion*. In regeneration there is a power *conferred*; conversion is the exercise of that power. In regeneration there is given us a principle *to turn*; conversion is our *actual turning*. One gives *posse agere*, the other *actu agere*. Conversion is related to regeneration as the *effect* to the *cause*. Life precedes motion and is the *cause* of motion. A principle of activity will produce action. Regeneration is the motion of God in the creature, conversion is the motion of the creature towards God. Regeneration is a *taking down* the law of sin, and a *fixing up* the law of God in the mind. As there was a strong *impetus* in the old nature, inclining it to sin; so there is a strong impulse in the *new nature*, biasing it to observe and keep the commands of

for help? Our pride and self-sufficiency must come down, before we can possibly ascend to the happy regions of life and immortality.

If a man would know whether he possesses heart-purity, in the scripture-sense of the term, let him examine his inclination and desires; observe the motions of his will, and the tendency of his affections. The *desire* is properly the pulse of the soul. A pure heart hates all sin, and therefore dreads and avoids all *occasions* of it, all temptations leading to it. It makes a man to know, that in working out his salvation, it must be with fear and trembling. A blessed confidence in Jesus Christ and fear and trembling may yet agree in the same subject. The wakeful christian is well aware that numerous temptations render his path *slippery*, and therefore dangerous. That there is nothing which comes before him, but may prove an occasion of sin. He who would be wise unto salvation must fly, instantly fly from temptation. There is no preserving our purity without even using our lawful enjoyments with caution and circumspection.

of God. The new creature receives the *image* of God; not as a glass receives the image of a man, which is only in *appearance* and not a real existence. But as wax receive the image of a seal, which, though it does not receive the substance of a seal, yet receives exactly the impression, in its various lineaments. There is a necessity for *regeneration* to the performance of gospel duties. We cannot else perform them spiritually, because we are *flesh*; nor vitally, because we are *dead*; nor graciously, because we are *corrupt*; nor voluntarily, because we are *enmity*; nor delightfully, because we are *alienated*; nor sincerely, because we are *treacherous*; nor humbly, because we are *proud*; nor constantly, because we are *volatile*. So that our nature *must be* changed before we can be fit for any gospel service.

CONVERSION.

CONVERSION.

I do not say that *conversion* is effected by the force of words, by mere moral suasion. No, for if we consider the strength of our corruption, and how it is transfused into the very principles of our nature, and seized upon all our powers, I am confident that it cannot be subdued, much less eradicated by mere moral suasion. Mere words at best can but convince the judgment, the heart must be changed by a much higher power, even by an immediate omnipotent work of God's Spirit, infusing a quality into the soul, which quality was not there before. And which will by degrees, weaken and work out our inherent natural corruption. And this being a *creating* work, is effected solely and immediately by God himself; for as much as *creation* admits of no instrument, being an effect of that infinite creative power, which cannot be conveyed to any instrument whatever. That God is pleased to use instruments in converting sinners from the error of their ways, is granted. God has instituted the ministry to that very end, and he will honour his own institution. So that while the minister is preaching and persuading, God puts forth another *secret influence*, quite different and superior to that of the preacher's voice, though still accompanying his voice. And it is *this*, by which God immediately touches the sinner's heart and converts him. It well becomes a preacher, however, to make the most direct attack upon the sinner's heart, in order to convince and persuade. Because, for a preacher in his discourses to the people, to dwell always and only upon universals, and in generals, is but a cold, faint, languid

languid way of either persuading or dissuading. To tell men in general that they are sinners, and that going on in sin without repentance, they are under the wrath and curse of God : * all which, they think they knew before, and so receive it as a word of course, and as lightly regard it. But *conviction*, the usual fore-runner of conversion, is generally from *particulars*. As if the preacher should tell his hearers, that *he* who continues to defraud and equivocate, is a wicked and impenitent wretch ; and that *he* who drinks, swears and commits adultery is *the very person* to whom the curse properly and certainly belongs. By this conviction is carried home to the conscience and lodged there too.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.

There are many who measure their own piety and moral goodness, not by the sure standard of God's word, but by the impiety and immorality of other men. And, because they do not revel with the drunkard, swear with the profane, or with some lordly tyrant, grind the faces of the *poor*, will conclude themselves holy and in a fair way for heaven. Thus they delude themselves ; and because they are not so bad as the worst, conclude themselves very good. To argue by comparison in this concern, is the most ready and effectual way for a man to argue himself into a delusion. The hypocrite thinks himself religious, not from any goodness of his own, but from the badness of others. He entertains both hope and comfort not upon judgment but comparison.

† If *this* was cold and languid in the doctor's judgment, what would he have thought of *modern* preaching ?

SELECT

SELECT SENTENCES.

LET the preacher remember, that reprehensions which are *promiscuous*, are always ineffectual.—Infidelity will never be accounted unreasonable till it has made the infidel completely miserable.—Jesus Christ teaches his saints outwardly by his word, and inwardly by his Spirit; as the Great Prophet sent into the world for that purpose.—Anger is anger, and has all the deformities of that passion, whether it frets in a concealed *disgust*, or breaks forth in open slander and violent opposition.—Anger is an untamed beast, and needs a bridle, without a metaphor. It is often loud and destructive, and, like a *lion*, first it *roars*, and then it *devours*.—It is a duty which every man owes to the public, to call *vice* by its own name; which name, if it be infamous, the cause is in him who *deserves*, not in him who *bestows* it.—He who *commends* a villain, is not only an approver, but *ipso facto*, a party concerned in the villany.—When we consider the *obstructions* which impede the believer's progress, we must confess that nothing short of omnipotent grace can subdue his passions, regulate his affections, and enable him to persevere to the end, and come off *victorious*.—It is a *base* thing to *revile*, this is confessed. Do not I, by reviling again, repeat that baseness? and so credit an ill copy by transcribing it? Jesus Christ was reviled, but he reviled not again.—The man who thinks that he discovers *spirit* and a dignity of mind, by a scurrilous reply to a scurrilous provocation, measures himself by a false standard, and acts, not the spirit of a man, but the spleen of a *wasp*.—If we look only upon the *outside* of

of an affliction, we may not be able to discern the *principle* from which that affliction may proceed. *Gehazi's* leprosy, and the sores of *Lazarus*, may seem to be inflicted from the same displeasure; and yet one was a *curse* for hypocrisy, and the other a *trial* of humility.—That *very love* by which God is indeed our friend, makes him sometimes *appear* to be our enemy. For he *afflicts*, but he then afflicts to chastise negligence, to quicken our vigilance, and to give us *safety* instead of *security*.—Persons who are indeed holy, have a tender conscience and fear to offend God, are yet sadly prone to look upon the dispensations of providence on the *wrong side*, and so draw severe conclusions respecting their own state and condition.—Believers may rest assured that the severest dispensations of God, do not always proceed from *anger*; it is very possible, because very usual, that they proceed from the contrary, *love*.—God is a being unchangeable, and that man must be exceeding ignorant of the actuality, simplicity, and immutability of the divine nature, who can suppose and believe that God can altar his counsels, and revoke his purposes. No such thing, for as he has thought so shall it come to pass, and as he has purposed so shall it stand.—The wounds which God himself makes, none but God himself can heal.—Men cannot conceive what strength, the weakest creature hath to do mischief, when the divine wrath shall unite with it; nor how easily a small calamity will sink the soul, when that wrath shall hang weights upon it. Did not two *kings* prove, by sad experience, the truth of this observation? *Pharaoh* and *Herod*.—Christians, beware how you dote upon worldly possessions and enjoyments. God can send a worm to bite the *gourd*, while it flourishes over our heads; and while he gives *riches*, deny an
heart

heart to *enjoy* them.—Greatness is not always happiness, and the man who possesses much, may nevertheless, *feel* that in it, which we do not *see*.—The *gifts* of God are nothing without the *smiles* of God. His favour only can animate his gifts, and give life to *enjoyment*. As it is not the number of hours, but the shining of the sun which makes the day.—If God *frowns*, soon the whole scene of our affairs change and darken; all is over-cast and a presaging gloom succeeds; honour is vanity, power a trouble, riches a burden; gold looses all its *lustre* and retains nothing but its *weight*.—Let the ungodly sinner, however wealthy, remember, that it is not the substance of those things which he calls plenty, that can speak *comfort*, when the *anger* of God shall blast the whole with a curse. He may build his nest soft and convenient, but *that* can easily place a thorn in the midst of it, that shall interrupt and check our *repose*.—Fear does not only *tremble* at shadows, but *creates* them, and *always* gives you something *larger* than the substance. Compare the *object* of fear with the *fear* of the object, and see how much the copy spreads beyond the original.—Gold and silver, though they are sometimes *convenient*, yet they are always heavy: many travellers, while they have been anxiously troubled about the method to secure their money, have *missed* their way. Christ sends forth his disciples as *soldiers*, and he *counsels* and *arms* them accordingly. Let us fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.—*Salvation* is a reward so glorious as must animate the soul under the most trying calamities.—The evils which men inflict are not to be feared, because they are limited by God's over-ruling hand. The Lord reigns, though the earth be ever so unquiet.—Death puts a divorce between thy soul
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and body, christian; yes, and it also separates between thy soul and thy sins.—There is a spiritual *skill* by which the believer may exact such an elixir out of worldly crosses, that those very crosses may prove in the end the most sovereign consolations.—The christian should discover an heroic spirit, and scorn to be out-braved by any in spiritual fortitude; and in cases of danger say as Nehemiah, “Should such a man as I flee?”—Christian, to flatter or fear any man, is to debase thyself, and to betray the privilege and dignity of thy soul; there is a grandeur in religion which every christian should labour to maintain.—Believer, conscientiously pursue thy duty, in that course of life in which God has placed thee, and trust all thy concerns with providence: disdain to step aside to gather up the inconsiderable straws of human favours and preferments.—The God whom thou serveest is able to advance thee.—Wonderful are the workings of divine providence, and God often designs particular mercies in the midst of general judgments.—It is highly *unjust* to argue, or to infer what a man has done merely by what he suffers.—When a man’s professed *enemy* is his judge, whatever be the cause, you may foresee the *sentence*.—In all the dispensations of heaven, let us remember, that the wisdom of God is unsearchable. We see the dispensation, but we do not see the *design* of it; let us, therefore, suspend our judgment, nor dare to utter a rash censure.—God never inflicts an evil but for this great end, the advancement of his own glory, and that in a way for the believer’s good.—It is, certainly, a great judgment to be given up to report lies, but a still greater to *believe* them.†—THE

† A word to the *Deist*.

GOSPEL EXHIBITS THE BLESSED GOD, AS AR-
 RAYED IN ROBES OF MERCY, AND HOLDING OUT
 THE SCEPTRE OF PARDON, THE TERRORS OF
 MAJESTY ARE LOST IN THE BEAMS OF GRACE,
 AND JUSTICE ITSELF DISAPPEARS IN THE ABYSS
 OF COMPASSION. *Trembling soul, come forward and
 rise by the condescension of thy Maker and thy God.*—
 It would have non-plussed the utmost wisdom of men
 and angels, to have found a *mediator* capable to dis-
 charge the debt of sinners, and to satisfy the justice
 of heaven ; but the discovery was neither too far,
 nor too deep for an infinite penetration—There is
 a *tinder* of concupiscence in our very nature, apt to
 catch fire from every *spark* that is struck from sinful
 objects. WATCH AND PRAY.—Grace never par-
 dons but it also *purifies* ; justification and sanctifica-
 tion are inseparable.—That God should pass by
 the fallen angels, the glory of his creation, and cast
 the skirt of his pardoning mercy over poor vile crea-
 tures, that lay wallowing in their guilt and in their
 blood ; that he should prefer dust and ashes to prin-
 cipalities and powers, and chuse vessels of honor from
 among those who were objects of contempt : *this* is
 an act of pardon, made up of mercy and prerogative,
 and of which no reason can be assigned, but the good
 pleasure of him, who worketh all things according
 to the counsel of his own will.—Mercy is a miracle
 which *Moses* never shewed, and pardon an absurdity
 in the documents of mount *Sinai*.—Where there is
 no fear there can be no government ; now, in what
 way does Jesus Christ create and promote a reveren-
 tial awe and a becoming fear in the hearts of his
 disciples ? Not by the rack, the prison, or the sword ;
 but by the engaging methods of *pardon* and *compassion*.
 In this way does he bind the heart to himself, compel

to obedience, and renders his disciples attentive to his will and fearful to offend. There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared.—He that receives an injury may pardon it; but he who first does an injury, is generally, *irreconcilable*.—The human heart is, naturally, so *hard*, that it often remains unaffected and unconvinced in the midst of convincing means.—The mere excellency of the things proposed to be understood and embraced, can never give ability to an heart of adamant, to apprehend and embrace them: that ability must be derived from the Holy Spirit.—Where God bestows divine *grace*, it is an habit placed equally in the *understanding* and the *will*.—There are many who never knew God so as to *obey* him, and therefore in effect, never knew him at all.—Grace is known by its own evidence: it is the white stone shining with a degree of clearness to him who possesses it.—A dark room may sooner enlighten itself, than a *natural* understanding expel its own ignorance in matters of *faith*. A man in his natural, unregenerate state, *cannot know the things of God*. There is an impotence rising to an impossibility.—There is a certain secret of the Lord, locked up from the view of proud *reason*, and is only with them who *fear* God.—Nature prying into spirituals, is like *Pompey*, when he looked into the *ark* of God, *seeing* indeed, but *understanding not*.—The apostle declares, “we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing.” A good *thought* is, certainly, the lowest strain of piety, but the first step to grace; yet, we see from hence, it is higher than *nature* can rise.—There is, generally speaking, no such tyrant as a servant when he steps into dominion. If the body, and the bodily appetites gain the ascendancy, they will reign and rule with absolute sway,

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and out-face and trample upon whatever reason may urge to the contrary, Hence says *Paul*, " I bring under my *body* and keep it in subjection."—The subtlety of the world disdains the simplicity of the gospel. " Not many wise, not many great, not many noble," regard it.—With many in the world, purity must give way to *profit*; with them, the love of *present* possessions out-weighs the hope of *future* felicity.—How hardly is proud nature convinced of its own weakness! —The *Trinity* may be fairly argued from these words, " When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth," &c. Herein we may observe, 1. The person *sent*, the Holy Ghost. 2. The person *sending*, Jesus Christ. 3. The person *from whom* he is sent, the Father. So great a mystery have we lying in so small a compass; that, which neither the heaven of heavens cannot contain, nor the grasp of human thought comprehend, we see here represented in one period of this sublime evangelist.—The Trinity is a great mystery, and yet it is a query whether God is not more wonderful in his *love*, than in the *mode* of his existence.—The salvation of immortal souls is, by no means, left to *chance*, nor to any thing like contingency. All the persons in the blessed Trinity are engaged in the important work. And where a God both *purposes* and *executes*, the work must be done.—Let men say, or pray, or pretend what they will, he who has a *covetous heart*, is in the sight of God, a *covetous wretch*.—Those will never share in the benefit of the Redeemer's *sacrifice*, who have not submitted to the rule of his sceptre.—Such is the carnal security which prevails, that now it is the usual custom of men, not to think of their souls till their body is given over; nor to care for the *divine* till they

they are left by the *physician*.—Whatever measures a man may propose to himself, in regard to religion, he will certainly find, that to mortify lust and sin, and be a christian in reality, is a more important concern, than now and then, to lift up his eyes, with great apparent devotion, and say, *Lord, have mercy upon us!* or to hear an absolution, which perhaps does not at all belong to him.—As the service of God is perfect freedom, so the service of the flesh is perfect slavery.—The business of a christian is not *invention*, but *imitation*. Be ye followers, μιμηται imitators of God, as dear children.—The sum total of our belief, is *Christ*, and of our obedience, *conformity*. He who will crucify his sin, must give it no quarter, but pursue it to the very death.—Sin stands as a malefactor, condemned to death by the law of God; and God has, in a sense, entrusted every man with the execution of his own sin; and God will require *life for life*; so that, if a man lets his sin escape, the life of his soul must be its ransom.—We are commanded to “crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts.” This precept must be understood in its fullest latitude. A man is charged to *kill* his corruption. God’s hatred is directed against the life and being of sin; and for a man to spare that is to be absurdly cruel to his own soul. To oppose it without designing its *death* is but hypocrisy. A *Saul* may captivate and imprison an Agag, but a pious *Samuel* will slay him.—The pain of *crucifixion* is, of all other pains, the most *acute*. Distending every part of the human frame; every sinew and fibre. Thus it must be in the mortification of sin. The body of sin, with *all* its parts and members must suffer and die. We may be certain, that something real and important is intended by such an expression, “*crucifying of sin*.”—Every

man, who calls himself a protestant, will grant that it is necessary for him to be a christian : yet unless he has crucified the flesh, he cannot be so ; and his assuming that title is a perfect *usurpation*.—God has woes enough in store to humble the highest and the proudest tyrant.—Cruelty and oppression alarms mankind, calls up all the passions of human nature, and puts them into a posture of hostility, and self-defence.—The first ingredient in the woe discharged against a tyrant is, to be universally *hated* and *scorned* ; never to go out but with a retinue of curses at his heels ; to be murdered in the wishes, and to be assassinated in the very looks of his subjects.—He that is injurious, is naturally suspicious, and fears that every one is his enemy.—What can all the enjoyments of a court or kingdom profit, when there is a tormentor *within*, and the paleness of fear and death sits perpetually upon the heart?—The sin of blood-guiltiness, is a sin of a peculiar and malignant cast ; murdering others, besides those whom it kills ; it breaks the back of governments, sinks families, destroys for the future, reaches *successors*, and cuts off posterities. N. B. Let the *slave-merchants*, and all who are connected with that *infamous* traffic, consider *this*.—It is certain, that he who takes away a man's life in a war, commenced upon *unjust* principles, is as truly a *murderer*, as the man who violently enters his neighbour's house, and stabs him within his own walls.—When Christ disputed with the Jewish doctors, every argument he used was a demonstration of his Deity.—Ignorance and prejudice are prevailing evils ; for it is the very ground-work of Satan, first to delude and blind the understanding of men, that so he may command their services.—For a man to take pleasure,

sure, not only in his own sin, but in the sin of other men, is, so to speak, the perfection of an *overgrown impiety*.—Christ, as our *prophet*, removes the vail of ignorance which clouds the human mind, and illuminates the understanding by his heavenly doctrine.—Christ by his evangelical ministry, unlocked the cabinet of God's hidden counsels, and has afforded means to enlarge our acquaintance with divine truth, and the mysteries of redemption.—It is not merely *what* a man does, but *why* and *how*, which denominates his action good or evil before God. *Herod* may build a *temple*, and even worship in it, and yet be *Herod* still. *Judas* may both pray and preach, and yet remain a *Judas* still.—Not to value Christ more than *all* is really to *undervalue* him. An ordinary affection to an *extraordinary* object, is, in fact, no affection.—Worthiness is a thing which no man can plead before God; for, after we have done all, we are still *unprofitable*, and therefore still unworthy.—A man must first believe Christ *excellent* before he can account him *dear*.—The design of love is to appropriate, as well as to approximate its object to the soul: and to chuse a thing is the first access to a propriety in it. Choice is possession begun, and possession is choice perfected.—Love without works, is a greater absurdity than faith without works; faith works by love, and love by *obedience*. Let no man think to divide himself between God and mammon; to give his love to Christ, but his service to the world.—When Christ and the world, Christ and our credit, Christ and our profit, come into competition, then is the time to try our affections.—Competition is the touchstone of reality.—True love to Jesus Christ implies a full acquiescence and satisfaction in *him alone*, and that in

the absence and want of every other felicity and comfort.—Many love Christ as they love their temporal king, *i. e.* while his affairs seem to flourish, and all goes well.—“Fear not, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward,” is a promise to the christian, that, surely, may reach the utmost of his thoughts, confute his doubts, and make good the reason of his obedience in any circumstance whatever.—Where the love of Christ has once taken possession of the heart, though a man lives *in* the world, yet he lives not *upon* it.—When the world affords the believer *nothing*, yet even then he has *meat* to eat, of which natural men know nothing.—Whatever is amiable attracts our *love*, but that which is excellent *commands* it. Jesus Christ is supremely excellent and need only to be *known* in order to be loved.—It is impossible for a man to shew more love than he does to his favourite sin, and it is not possible for his bitterest enemy to pay him with more *fatal* returns.—A man who courts sin, courts a *serpent*, which will certainly sting him to death for all his kindness.—Every ungrateful person, who receives much kindness and repays none, only acts another kind of robbery; he really with-holds a due, and is indeed a *thief* within the protection of the law.—That man, who is a stranger to communion with God and his own heart, may rest assured that he is not in earnest when he calls himself a *christian*.—Some men will not *introduce* ungodly conversation, but will *countenance* them who do; now such are, to all intents and purposes, sharers in the *guilt*.—There is not a single duty of religion which demands a more serious attention, than *prayer*. It being the most solemn intercourse a man can have with his maker. The nearest access to him who dwells in light inaccessible, and

and the most sanctified means, for a creature to derive spiritual and eternal blessings upon his soul.—The man who engages in *prayer*, must know that he engages in one of the most weighty and important actions of his whole life.—It is reported of an holy person, that he usually spent an hour in meditation, before he kneeled down to prayer.—The sons of presumption will never be heard. Their hasty prayers lie by totally neglected. They took no time in making them, but God will take time enough before he will grant them.—Christ appears for us not only as an advocate, but as a *surety*, paying down to God on our behalf the very utmost his justice can exact. He suffered, he bled, he died for those, on whose behalf he intercedes; so that he brings satisfaction in one hand, while he presents a petition with the other. He undertakes and pays the debt, and thereby cancels the bond; so that the law, and justice itself, have both lost their hold of the sinner; having fled to Christ for refuge, he is become a discharged and justified person.—God commands our petitions: now he who bids another ask a certain thing of him, tells him in effect, that he has resolve d to grant it.—We may be sure that Christ will not be wanting in the prosecution of *our* interest, when, by the very offices he has undertaken, he has made our interests *his own*.—It is as impossible for any member of the *natural* body to be injured, and the *head* remain unaffected and unconcerned, as that any member of the mystical body to suffer, and Christ the head remain unconcerned.—Christ knows all our affairs, and, what is more, our hearts too, far better than we know them ourselves.—Such is the weakness of our understanding, and the strength of our affections, that we pray for things which, if granted, would

prove an injury to us.—It is not always piety or discretion which indites our prayers, but a sinful impatience under some present grievance, or a passionate desire of some earthly enjoyment.—A man who would speak forcibly upon any subject whatever, must get his *heart* thoroughly affected with it, as well as his *head* clearly furnished with the knowledge of it.—Christ is a more powerful *advocate* than satan can be an *accuser*.—God requires that we should come with boldness to the throne of grace; but then he requires that our boldness should be founded on *knowledge*, for he neither approves the *sacrifice* nor the *confidence* of fools.—The Spirit calls; sinner, if the word of God has been a burden to thee, and the sabbath of God a trouble, what a weight will there be in *damnation*; and, if mercy prevent not, that will soon be upon thee.—Every sinful action is only the boiling over of sinful corruption from the heart.—Reverence the dictates of conscience; for, though walking according to its utmost dictates is not sufficient to save us, yet opposing and going contrary to the same will most certainly condemn us.—Most assuredly, the just and all-discerning God, who takes the exact dimensions of sin, will heat the furnace of his wrath seven times hotter for gospel reprobates, than for ignorant heathens.—Good inclinations are the first-born of holiness in the soul.—How often do some men think of repairing to Christ for salvation, and yet are held fast by the fetters of some prevailing lust.—God is said to “work all things according to the counsel of his own will.” Herein, he resembles an excellent artificer, who lays down his *plan* beforehand, a perfect model of his intended fabrick. It is finished in the contrivance, before it is so much as begun

begun in the execution. Shall I decree, says God, and shall it not come to pass? and shall any thing come to pass, and yet he not decree? impossible.—God will soon let those who resist his Spirit, see, that as he was *merciful* to endure with them so long, so he is too *holy* to bear with them any longer.—Mercy, whatever vain hopes men may entertain, neither can nor will rescue an *impenitent* sinner from the hand of justice.—It is the height of spiritual prudence to derive caution from danger, and to gather instruction from affliction.—Believer, *discrimination* puts a value upon mercy and greatly endears it. Enjoyments that are *peculiar* are usually *precious*.—The office of the Holy Spirit consists in these two great works, to *instruct* and to *comfort*.—He who will not be *reformed* by the Holy Ghost, can never be *comforted* by him. “*Righteousness* and *joy* in the Holy Ghost” go linked together.—Purity and spiritual joy are as closely united as *sin* and *sorrow*. Sinner, when you come to look *death* in the face, and are upon your passage into an *eternal* world, *then* you will prize the comforts of the Spirit. And, if you wish to enjoy them in that disconsolate hour, beware how you resist his strivings *now*.—A man may be said to be in a reprobate state, when he has lost all spiritual *taste* and *feeling*; and whatever is said of heaven or hell, or God or eternity, nothing *affects* him.—Custom in sin produces boldness in sin; and we know boldness is, for the most part, grounded upon the insensibility of danger.—Vast numbers in the world contradict their profession by their *practice*; and while they own designs for heaven, yet live and act, as if they were candidates for hell and probationers for damnation.—The blessed God, being a *spirit*, judges as a spirit, and can never be put off with dross and dissimulation,

simulation, paint and varnish. What will pass with *men*, will never pass with *God*.—How were the *Pharisees* besotted, and to what a pitch of piety had they arrived; making it a damnable sin, forsooth, to deprive the *priest* of sallet, but a very allowable thing to suffer a *parent* to starve with hunger! It is an high affront to mercy for any one to pretend *merit*. This, is to pull Christ down from the cross, to degrade his mediatorship; and, in a word, to nullify and abrogate the whole work of man's redemption.—Pharisees come to church and frame themselves into *postures of devotion*, just as many women dress themselves only to be looked upon and admired.—A small particle of dust falling into the eye is very troublesome, just so is the least sin in the eye of a sanctified person.—Those who live dissolutely in *this* world, and yet wish for the rewards of the righteous in *that* which is to come, commence all such wishes and hopes upon the ground of ignorance and mistake. They have never considered how unsuitable, and therefore irksome the whole business of heaven would be to their un sanctified appetites and desires. What felicity could it be to a man always accustomed to the revels and songs of the drunkard, to bear a part in the chorus of saints and angels, hymning loud hallelujahs to him who sitteth upon the throne?—Grief is, sometimes, too deep for expression; yet when the tongue is silent, the countenance betrays the inward pang. And when sorrow cannot be known by its voice it may be traced by its *tears*.—In trouble, the consolations of the gospel, and the presence of Jesus Christ, are infinitely desirable, and the true believer is acquainted with both.—That man, who has tears to spend in memory of a *lost friend*, but none to shed at the thoughts of

a *lost innocence*, a wasted conscience, and a provoked God, has but too much cause to suspect the truth of his sorrow, and the sincerity of his repentance.—To sin against *mercy*, is to sin against our last remedy.—As God destroyed many of the children of Israel in the wilderness for their murmurings, and denied them entrance into the promised land; so he will eternally destroy all obstinate unbelievers now, and exclude them the everlasting rest in heaven. Let the proud infidel consider this, and take warning in time.—Gospel ordinances are good things; but, let it be remembered, that those very ordinances can effect nothing of themselves; the secret energy of the Holy Ghost must work with ordinances, or they are deficient and vain.—God can, and for sin, he sometimes does, curse our blessings; he can fix such a curse upon the very means of grace, that a man may want them while he enjoys them, *i. e.* he may want them in the life and force of them, while he enjoys them in the letter; as a man may eat and yet not be nourished: for it is not the *bread* which nourishes but the blessing.—When men grow worse and worse under sermons and sacraments, as is certainly the case with numerous professors, and produce only briars and thorns, they are nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burned.—God's providences are always subservient to his purpose and his word.—In many incidents and occasional passages of our lives, there are such strong and expressive marks of the *divine will*, that such as have their senses spiritually exercised, do not only *see* the hand, but also *hear* the voice of him who sent them.—When God sends home the word of his truth, with convincing power to some one in the assembly, you may safely conclude it was done *designedly*. Distinction

tion and discrimination was never yet the effect of *chance*.—When a man, instead of being *humbled* by an affliction, is *enraged* at it ; and, instead of laying at God's feet, flies in his face ; we may be sure that man's judgment slumbereth not, it is certainly at hand.—What can prevent sin from reigning when a man's conscience is hardened ? A hardened conscience cannot feel the evil of sin, and unless we feel the evil of sin, we never shall resist it.—The corruption of a man's heart, unrenewed by divine grace, is the cause of its own hardness.—The word of God does not convert a sinner, by any mere persuasive force, naturally inherent in the same, but by a divine power co-operating with it.—The grace of God is so singular and so sovereign in its operation, that sometimes it fastens upon old overgrown sinners ; such as, to the eye of reason, were going apace to hell, and almost at their journey's end.—Every repeated act of sin, sets a man one step nearer to hell.—It is a dangerous thing to *trifle* with God ; God is indeed *merciful*, but we know mercy itself may be *angry*, and compassion provoked, may swear our destruction. He swore in his wrath, saying, they shall not enter into my rest.—*Atheism* lurks in secret, it is too conscious to be open ; to be open and appear is the property of *truth*, the daughter of the light and of the day.—There, in the heart, the sinner dethrones his Maker, and deposes conscience from the seat of government.—There is nothing more properly the language of the heart, than a *wish*.—Some have sinned their accounts so high, that they dare not look the persuasion of a Deity in the face ; and therefore strive to hide themselves from God, by hiding God from themselves.—*Wit*, however brilliant, is to be despised when made the vehicle of immorality ;

morality ; as it then becomes a *lightning* to destroy. — People first call themselves christians, and then take it for granted that they *are* such ; but the kingdom of God is not in *word* but in *power*. — It is our *misery* and not our merit, which renders us proper objects of God's mercy. — Repentance is a tear dropt from the eye of faith. — We must so apprehend a *merciful* God, that we forget not he is *just* ; and so remember he is *just*, as not to forget he is *merciful*. To omit the one we shall *presume*, and to omit the other we shall *despair*. — A land of levity is a land of guilt. — A serious mind, made so by the divine Spirit, is the native soil of every virtue. — There is no surer prognostic of impending ruin in any state, than to see divine worship neglected or despised. — *Discontent* is an infallible mark of *want* ; now the rich are as subject to this as the poor. — The life of Christ was a continued miracle, in every instance of behaviour, his divinity beamed through his humanity. — Christian, you may well suspect that those arguments always proceed from the *flesh*, which tend to the *gratification* of the flesh. — We must stand aloof from the sin which does easily beset us ; it is difficult to dwell near to that sin without stepping into it ; neighbourhood is still the occasion of visits. — The man, whose *nature* is sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and his passions regulated by the discipline of true religion, is no slave to lust, to pride, or to idleness. — It is impossible, in the nature of things, that a mere creature can merit any thing from his Creator, by way of reward. — Whatsoever God *ordains* by his word, he usually *owns* by his assistance. — Men never more liberally call for their *cups*, than when they have too liberally taken them already. — Men are generally brought to sin even against their conscience,

science, upon the presumption of a *future* repentance. — Does any one say, I have my heart in my own hand, thus far will I sin, and there will I leave off? Such a man proves that he neither knows his own heart, nor understands the nature of sin. — *Commission* of sin may wound, but it is *continuance* in sin which destroys. — A flint may as easily melt into drops, as the human heart dissolve into tears of real repentance from any innate virtue in itself. — God's performances are ever commensurate to his expressions. — Sinner, remember this, a delayed repentance, is a downright defiance to mercy; and every moment which a man spends under such delay, he actually heaps up wrath against the day of wrath. — Repentance, though it cannot merit or deserve, yet is it necessary to qualify the soul for heaven. — The resurrection of Jesus Christ proved him to be the Son of God *consequentially*; *i. e.* as it was an irrefragable confirmation of the truth of that doctrine which had declared him to be so. — A man may as well go abroad and leave his flesh behind him, as for an unregenerate man to go any where without his corrupt principles. — He who does not resist sin, by watching, striving, and praying against it, actually *loves* it. — He who does not *oppose* the tempter *invites* him. — A man may have clean *hands* and yet possess a foul *heart*. — The acceptance of our *prayers* is founded upon the acceptation of our *persons*, and this, we know, is founded upon and arises from our interest in Christ. — The motions of sin, and of the spirit, often struggle in the same heart, as Pharez and Zarah did in the same womb. — Where there is, in supplication, no fervency on our part, no wonder if there be no answer on God's. — If the heart be torn from the body, it becomes a dead body; and the heart

heart separated from the prayer, makes a dead prayer. He who is in love and league with sin is a *traitor* against God.—Of all knowledge, that is the most excellent, upon which depends our eternal life; I mean our knowledge of God in Christ.—God commands us to confess our sins, not so much that he may know them, as that we may know them ourselves.—The distempers of the soul cause all the distempers of the body.—The best and most effectual way to remove national judgments, is to reform national and personal sins.—When God shakes his sword over a nation and the inhabitants take no notice of it; when he begins to lay hold on judgment, and the people neglect to lay hold on his mercy by humiliation and prayer; these are sad symptoms! Symptoms of a falling state.—God never corrects any one of his children, but either to prevent or remove sin.—Distressed soul, if thou hast an heart to mourn over thy sins, be assured that God has bowels of compassion to yearn over thee. Vide *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19, 20.—No vice was ever mortified by corporal discipline; it is not the *back* but the *heart* that must bleed for sin.—It is not always rational to measure the truth of an assertion merely by the standard of our apprehension; and therefore deny it *because* we cannot comprehend it.—Carnal *fear* is the disease of the soul: it flies from the shadow, and creates more danger than it avoids: it weakens the judgment and betrays the succours of reason; it is hard to *tremble* and yet not err.—*Galen*, who had no more divinity than what his physic taught him, considering the exact and elegant proportion of the human body, challenged any one, upon an hundred years study, to improve upon any part of the system.—In fallen man the passions rebel, and there are

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so many governors that there can be no government.
 —No man ever opposed Christ but it was, in some way or other, to gratify *self*.—Wheresoever, in God's word, we find a curse to the *guilty* expressed, in the same words mercy to the *penitent* is still understood.—Jesus Christ demands the homage of our understanding; he will have our proud reason bow to his superior wisdom.—Many ministers, while they have preached Christ in their sermons, have read a lecture of Atheism in their practice. Is it *right* to give them countenance, and so bid them God-speed? —To be resolute in a *good* cause, is to bring upon ourselves the punishments due to a *bad* cause; the apostles and many pious reformers have found it so. —*Truth* is a possession of the highest value, and must needs expose the owner to danger.—Good shepherds must stand close by the flock, when the wolf comes.—Sin is usually seconded with sin: and a man seldom commits one sin to *please*, but he commits another to *defend* himself.—No *sin*, though concealed from human eyes, can escape the knowledge of God.—He who truly fears God can never despise a worthy magistrate.—There is no way so effectual to betray the truth, as to procure it a *weak* defender.—Our religion is that which will face the world, and dare to be understood; it has no objection to the light, and will bear the severest scrutiny and investigation.—A corrupt governour is a reigning sin, and a sin *office* may command any thing but respect.—God will never fail those who do not think themselves too wise to *trust* him.—That which makes the *clergy* glorious, is to be *wise* in their profession, *pure* in their lives, *active* in their ministry, and compassionate to all men.—Tell a miser of bounty to a friend, or of mercy to the poor, yet he

he will not understand, but shut his eyes as close as he does his hand, and secretly resolves not to be convinced.—Men are *Atheists* because they are vitious; they question the truth of christianity, only because they hate the *practice*.—It is the same spirit which purifies the heart and illuminates the understanding.—Men may sin themselves into a state of the most confirmed ignorance. *Is not this the case with infidels?*—It is *experience* which must give, and increase knowledge in the christian profession, as well as in every other profession.—The truth of Christ is the christian's *philosophy*, and an exemplary life is the christian's *logic*.—Quacks and mountebanks, are doubtless, a dangerous sort of men in *physic*, but much more so in *divinity*; and he who loves *shooting and dancing*, better than *study and preaching*, is a quack to all *intents and purposes*.—It is no man's *duty* to be safe, or to be rich; but I am sure it is the duty of every one to make good his trust.—Christian, never forget, that both law and gospel call aloud for *active* obedience; there is no time to *trifle*.—Whatever may serve to exercise and non-plus the human mind, we may be certain of this, that the Holy Ghost cannot possibly *contradict* in one part of scripture what he has affirmed in another.—The shortest and surest way to prove whether any work be *possible*, is strenuously to set about it.—He who can undergo any labour rather than *die*, must refuse no labour rather than *sin*.—Let no man pretend that he has an heart to *pray*, when he has no heart to *give*; since no man who serves mammon with his *estate*, can possibly serve God with his heart.—Nature gave no man a mouth to be *always eating*, and never saying *grace*; nor an hand always to receive and never to give.—Though gratitude does not *infer* grace, it is certain that ingra-

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.titude does *exclude* it.—Where there is no charity,
 it is certain, there can be no religion.—When one
 thing is signified or expressed, and the same thing not
 meant, that is properly a *lie*.—Sin gains upon a
 man, by representing that as *desirable*, which in re-
 ality is *not* so.—Jesus Christ saves men by *undeceiv-*
ing them.—So far as truth gains ground in the
 world, so far sin loses it.—The sanctification of
 the will *begins* in the illumination of the understand-
 ing.—It is a sad thing not to know *whom* we may
 trust, but a much worse to have behaved so as not to
 be trusted *oneself*.—Ingratitude is too *base*, to return
 a kindness, and too *proud* to regard it.—What-
 soever *defiles* the conscience, does in the same degree
darken it.—*Custom* in sinning, takes away the *sense*
 of sin, and we may add, the sight of it too.—It is
 impossible for a man to turn *fool*, but, in the nature of
 things, he must make himself a *blockhead* too.—
 This may be fixed upon, as a certain maxim, that
ambition first blinds the conscience, and then leads the
 man whither it will, and that is in a direct course to
 the devil.—Although it is as natural for a sinner to
 desire happiness as it is for him to breathe, yet he
 would rather miss of happiness than seek for it in the
 way of *holiness*.—He who is really a *christian*, is not
 only a better man, but a better neighbour, a better
 subject, and a more faithful friend, than he who is not
 so.—He who is indeed godly, is indeed peaceable.
 —Satan can shoot a temptation in a glance, and
 convey the poison of his suggestions quicker than the
 agitation of thought, or the stricture of fancy.—It
 is a lamentable consideration to think upon what *false*
 and *sinking* grounds, many venture their hopes of
 heaven and glory!—Nothing ought to be done but
 in *faith*, *i. e.* in a full persuasion of the *lawfulness* of
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what we do.—Jesus Christ conversed among the Jews as a walking *balsam*, breathing health and recovery wherever he came!—The Holy Spirit always *instructs* before he *saves*, and as he brings to happiness only by the ways of *holiness*, so he always leads to true holiness by the paths of *knowledge*.—*Cowardice* is neither acceptable to God or man, as it neither promotes the *honour* of one or the *good* of the other. —Many a man frames to himself such notions of a God, as have no foundation either in his nature or in his word.—God never accepts the *will* for the deed, where he puts it in a man's *power* to *do* as well as to *will*.—It is as impossible for the *spiritual* man to relish sin, as it is for the natural man to *feed* upon stones.—In a step, where the venture is for *eternity*, the greatest caution is the best security.—He who would thoroughly *know* himself, must thoroughly *try* himself.—It is often an hard lesson to *do* God's will, but it is an harder lesson to *suffer* it.—*Patience* is not the want of spirit, but the government of it. —It is much nobler to *pass by* an injury than to *repay* it.—God is certainly *right* in every dispensation, for, a being which is essentially wise, cannot do any thing unwise.—Providence is nothing else but infinite power managed by infinite *wisdom*. —The grounds of very great affronts, are not only *causeless*, but often very *senseless*.—He who dies in a *duel*, so falls to the earth, that it is to be feared, he falls much lower.—A truth may sometimes be reported with as malicious a *design* as the greatest falsity which was ever contrived by man.—If we pursue most of those contentions, which afflict the world and disturb the peace of society, up to their first principle, we shall find they originate in *pride*. —That mind is truly great and honourable, which

studies how to *heal* and bind up the bleeding wounds of society. — The two grand evils which disturb and distress the world, are *sin* and *death*, and Jesus Christ delivers from both. — Men wish to reconcile their future happiness with their present ease, pass to *glory*, without submitting to the *methods* of *grace*. — He who will not *fear*, shall certainly *feel* the wrath of heaven. — He who lives in the kingdom of *sense* shall die in the kingdom of *sorrow*. — He shall never truly enjoy his *present* hour, who never thinks on his *last*. — Mixed in the warm converse of life, we think with *men*; on a death-bed with *God*. — God's promises provide for us better than any thing we can carve for ourselves. — He who will take his portion in *this* life, must lose it in the *next*. — Others faults can never be our absolution. — A day of idleness is a day of guilt. — None can be wise for time, that are fools for eternity. — No man is great, till he sees that every thing in this world is little. — Whatever tends to exalt *self*, or to encourage *sin*, is (we may depend upon it) opposite to christianity. — To do every thing in the name of Jesus, is, to do all agreeably to *his will*; in *dependance* upon his strength; and with views to *his* glory. — An honest conscience, for information in point of duty, is of more use than a thousand folios. — Precious beyond rubies are the hours of youth and health; improve them with care; let none of them pass unprofitably away. — Upon a due portioning and employing of our time, all our progress in grace and knowledge, under God, depends. — Saving light from God discovers to man the state he is in, the holiness of the law, the need of a Saviour, and the excellency of the gospel. — A self-admired prayer is an unavailing prayer. — A false *zeal* is marked by these several properties, viz. much fire but

but little temper : many words but weak arguments : high bigotry but low candor.—If a man would live to God in *holy duties*, he must learn to live by *faith* in Jesus Christ.—The believer's manner of living by *faith* on the Son of God, is, to the carnal world, an inexplicable mystery.—They who keep Christ's word, will be kept by Christ's power.—The *effects* of justification are reconciliation and peace with God, consolation and joy from God, love and obedience to God, good will and kindness to men.—To excuse a sin is bad enough, but to defend it is intolerable.—If infidelity can persuade men, that they will certainly *die* like beasts, there is no doubt remaining, but that they will soon be brought to *live* like beasts also.—*Reason* is both the gift and image of God, and every degree of its real improvement is a further degree of likeness to him.—The artist who *paints* God, paints a contradiction ; for he attempts to make that *visible*, which in his own creed he professes to be *invisible*.

AFFLICTION.

GOD never strikes without a cause, nor wounds us, till our own offences draw the sword. God afflicts no man beyond his demerit ; short of it he certainly does. He sits down *fifty* in the punishment, where sin has run us in arrears five thousand talents. Not that our sufferings can make (as some ignorant people suppose) satisfaction for our sins. All satisfaction implies *recompence*, an adequate compensation. Our afflictions are *designed* to demonstrate to the world God's hatred of sin, and to imbitter sin to the sinner. To *punish*, properly taken, is one thing ; and to afflict, or *chastise*, quite another. “ Thou wast a God who

forgavest them (says the psalmist, Ps. xcix.) *though* thou tookest vengeance of their inventions." What! exercise *forgiveness* and *vengeance* upon the same persons? Light and darkness in the same region, and at the same time? Who can unriddle these obscurities, or reconcile the seeming contradiction! The solution is not so hard, if we consider, that eternal mercy may well consist with temporal severities, and the *pardon* of the sin with the *correction* of the sinner.

The Lord does not lop and prune us, because he delights to see us bare and poor and miserable, but because he would make us *fruitful*. Nor would he cause us to pass through the fiery furnace, but to purge and to refine us. Common humanity never uses the lancet to pain and torture, but to restore the patient. Now the tenderness and care of an *earthly* physician is but a faint shadow of the compassion which dwells in our *heavenly* physician.

We are too apt to repine, when the Lord is pleased to afflict us. But surely it is not right in us so to do. "Why should a living man complain; a man for the punishment of his sin?" *Lam. iii. 39.* In this passage, there are more arguments than either words or syllables, to demonstrate the unreasonableness of complaining against God. What, should any one complain of his *Benefactor*? And is not God such in a thousand instances? Should a guilty person complain against his judge, who compassionates his condition, and punishes him much less than his iniquity deserves? In every circumstance of trial and affliction, there is more reason to be *thankful* than to complain. When he chastises with whips, he might as justly lash us with scorpions. When he only corrects he might as justly confound us. Consider this, O man, and learn silence and submission.

If in our various troubles, we could but trust God with our concerns; leave it with him to assert our cause and vindicate our innocence, we should find that he would more than answer all our expectations; and that in the end we certainly shall reap an harvest of seven-fold joy, for sowing a little while in tears. Men are apt to think and to pronounce themselves miserable, because they pass judgment hastily. They do not wait the issue of a trial. God led his chosen people through a red sea, and through an howling wilderness, but it was in order to plant them in the flourishing land of Canaan. The groans of the humble and pious mourner shall be eventually converted into songs of everlasting triumph. A welcome and kind reception at our journey's end, will more than compensate for all the trials and difficulties attending us through the way.

POVERTY OF SPIRIT.

It is, doubtless, a great paradox in the opinion of the world, that any *poverty*, of whatever kind, should be desirable. But the gospel of Jesus Christ is a system of paradoxes and problems, which can never be solved upon the maxims of the world; their prime maxim being to accumulate wealth, and to gratify their sensual inclinations without any controul. Hence Jesus Christ begins his admirable sermon upon the mount with seven or eight propositions, which directly oppose the opinion and practice of the carnal world. He begins with a commendation of that which the world so much abhors, *poverty*. Saying, "*blessed is the poor in spirit.*"

Poverty of spirit consists in a deep and inward sense of our deplorable want of holiness. *Holiness*

the very perfection of our nature, but lost by the fall. We are born into the world poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. All the powers of our souls are crippled and disordered; we are not only weak but without strength. Our judgment is perverted, our will is depraved, and our affections are unholy, and fasten with strong attachments upon unworthy objects. This is the sad inheritance which we have derived from our first parents. These are the evils and the weaknesses under which we labour. And, the first step to our deliverance from them, is to be made sensible of them. For, we shall never seek to be what we are not, till we properly understand what we are. Self-opinion and self-love, are the two prime strong holds in fallen man; and to reduce these is one grand design of the gospel. By nature we are so prone to over-rate ourselves as to over-love ourselves. Now a man must be emptied of all his false principles, vain imaginations, and of *himself* too, before he can be meet and fit for the kingdom of heaven. The regenerate soul is an humble soul, he stands self-convicted and self-condemned. The man sees his own weakness and imperfections, and falls low at the footstool of divine mercy. His conscience teaches and inclines him to think the worst of himself: and his charity disposes him to judge the best he can of his neighbour.

The man who is poor in spirit, sees and feels and groans under a sense of his numerous deficiencies and wants. He laments the hardness of his heart—his want of life and activity in God's service. He complains of the weakness of his faith, the wanderings of his mind, and the coldness of his affections. He cannot pray with that fervour, hear with that attention, nor do the will of God in any one instance as he ought

ought to do it. He is made sensible of his total inability to deliver himself. Unable to enlighten his own understanding, to subdue his inclinations, and to sanctify his affections. Like a man bound hand and foot, he must be first *loosed* before he can be recovered. The assertion of *Pelagius* therefore, that the will is free, and in *full power* to chuse things spiritually good, even since the fall, is highly absurd, and such persons as maintain this heterodox opinion, demonstrate to all the world, that they know little or nothing of their own hearts. All the commanding rhetoric of men can never persuade one who is indeed *poor in spirit*, and thoroughly acquainted with his necessitous condition, that he is able to repent when he pleases, to believe when he pleases, and to perform the will of God. He looks upon it as a direct contradiction to his experience and to fact, and rejects it accordingly.

In using the means of grace, he does not depend upon them, but upon the blessed Spirit of God, as working in them and by them. The Lord is pleased sometimes to keep a soul long in waiting for particular blessings, to convince him more and more of the emptiness of all means: and to bring him to a proper dependance upon Jesus Christ, and the glorious fullness of his grace. To demonstrate to his mind that none but the Son of God can prove the Saviour of men. And that every believer is a debtor to the sole grace of God for ALL. This *poverty* of spirit is not nor can be the production of any thing in nature; it is a supernatural grace; it descends from above, from that eternal Spirit, who is the author and giver of every good and perfect gift.

Persons who possess this excellent spirit, are inoffensive in their deportment, and amiable in their character.

character. They are the best subjects in a kingdom ; the most peaceable members of a church ; and the greatest comfort to the family in which they dwell. May the Lord multiply such characters.

TALE-BEARING.

It was a saying worthy of Solomon, that " He who repeateth a matter, separateth very friends." To carry a *tale* from one to another is the principal business of some persons ; their minds appear congenial to such employ ; they are always at it. But to the tale-bearer I would say, know and consider, O injurious man ! that to report what such and such an one said, and another did, is the way to sow the seeds of prejudice and ill-will between different persons and parties, as may produce the most bitter and afflicting consequences ! Where is the prejudice and subsisting ill-will that did not first begin with a *tale* ? The mischief that such incendiaries do, is incredible, being for the most part *inevitable*. And a vine may as well flourish when a worm is gnawing at the root, as a political or religious society prosper, while *such* a character is harboured and concealed amongst them.

CIRCUMSPECTION.

Many are the evils and dangers to which a christian is exposed. It was therefore, with good reason, that our blessed Lord said to his disciples, " Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation." Constant circumspection is an arduous and painful task ; but then it is absolutely necessary. We are no longer safe than while we *watch* : and a sense of danger is the first step to safety. No man would spend a night upon the sentry,

sentry, who knew he might spend it as securely in his bed. " Had the good man of the house *known*, (says Jesus Christ) of the thief's coming, he would have watched; he would have kept his eyes open and his doors shut. Let a man, in every temptation, consider the evil which is designed him, and is certainly coming upon him: this will surely dispose him rather to choose a painful *circumspection*, than a lasting *injury*. But men slight and dally with temptation, because they do not believe there can be so much evil at the *bottom* of that, which looks so fair at the *top*. However, you may rest assured, that the evil which lies lurking under a temptation is inexpressible and intollerable. The design of it is, by leading thee from sin to sin, to harden thy heart, to debauch thy conscience, and seal thee up under a reprobate sense. If the tempter gains his point thus far, he has gained it *indeed*.

Let a man reason seriously with himself, if he would not fall, and say, " Either I must *watch*, and strive against this detestable sin and temptation, or I am lost; I must fight, or I must die; resist and stand out, or perish and sink for ever!" Reasoning *thus*, a man will not readily comply with, or fall by a temptation.

Another argument to induce circumspection arises hence, that a man has in his *own bosom*, that which will do him more mischief than any one thing that is *without* him,

A deceitful heart is more to be dreaded, than any outward enemy whatever, as having more advantage over him.

Watchfulness implies a continual, actual *intention* of mind upon the danger before us, in opposition to sloth and remissness. " Stand, (says the apostle, Eph.

Eph. vi.) having your loins girt about with truth." The security of a warrior is, to be always *ready*. While the bow is bent, it is still fit for execution. But, if the enemy comes, and finds that unbent, and the armour off, the man is run down and destroyed, before he can possibly bend the one, or put on the other. Then, it is to little purpose to cry out, "who would have thought it?" The fool's thoughts always come too late; *i. e.* too late to *rescue*, though not too late to *reproach* him.

N. B. Grace abhors a *vacuum* in time, as much as nature does in *place*; and happy beyond expression is that wise and vigilant christian, who, when the tempter comes, he shall find, filling up all his hours and minutes with business, and labouring to improve all to his soul's advantage. Next to his soul, his *time* is certainly the most precious thing he has in this world.

Purposed Repentance a fatal Delusion.

A design of repenting at some future period, has been the *ruin* of vast multitudes, especially young people. This is the great fort, the citadel and strong tower, which the soul has erected for itself, to which it may repair whenever it has a mind to sin with delight and security too. Most men know, that if they sin and die without repentance, they will certainly perish. But then they venture upon sin with a *design* to repent. The man *depends* upon the intervention of this to save him; and supposes he can practise the same whenever he chooses to set about it; he looks forward to distant and advanced years, and, in his deluded imagination, sees himself, a penitent pious christian.

But

But now let us take a nearer view of the *old man*. His memory is weak and treacherous; his apprehension slow, and his judgment infirm. And, perhaps all these natural impediments may be heightened by the pressure of bodily distempers. Lethargies may dispirit and benumb all his powers: or some acute disease divert his attention and enrage his passions. So that his whole man is in a state of tumult and disorder. Pain and weakness arrest him at the same time. The vigour of his intellects forsakes him; a fever scorches him; life is troublesome, and yet death is terrible. Now, is such an one in a *fit condition* to seek the blessing, or to exercise the duty of repentance? It is highly probable that a fearful multitude go off with the forced sorrows of *fear*, instead of repentance; and so die rather terrified than sanctified. I conclude, that, in advanced years, and on a death-bed, a man has all the indispositions both of body and mind which a man can have to unfit and disable him for repentance. In short, a death-bed repentance, is most difficult, doubtful, and dangerous.*

DAMNATION. †

Impenitent sinners will have to deal with an infinite God. A God who is holy and just, as well as merciful and good. An earthly judge may make an offender tremble; but to contend with an angry God, this must produce anguish of mind insupport-

* Do not the doctor's remarks in this whole paragraph particularly deserve the attention of *young people*?

† This word is a fearful word, but the thing itself is much more so. I never met with an author who uses the word so frequently and in so nervous a manner as Dr. SOUTH. I have suppressed the word again and again, lest it should tire the ear and lose its solemn effect.

able!

able! Not courts, nor armies, but an infinite power will attack rebellious sinners. Under this consideration, every possible ingredient which can make a thing terrible is comprehended. First, here is an irresistible force, and this force fired with an implacable anger: and then, both of these will encounter the greatest weakness united to the deepest guilt! And when a weak and guilty sinner is to deal with an omnipotent and an angry God, what can be expected but the extremity of torment? What penetration of the human mind, can reach the depth of this misery! When the living God shall cease to exist, then the guilty impenitent sinner, shall cease to be miserable. SINNER, thou hast trembled before now at the apprehensions of *death*, but is not *this* ten thousand times worse than death? Oh! be concerned, be alarmed, be convinced, be persuaded: renounce a delusive world, and flee to the Redeemer's arms of love: in him there is salvation for penitent sinners.

HEAVEN.

Our enjoyment of God in the kingdom of heaven is expressed by one grand and striking idea, that of *seeing* him. "Blessed are the *pure* in heart, for they shall *see* God.—We shall *see* him as he is.—Thine eyes shall *see* the king in his beauty. Now *sight* is superior to every other sense, in that it is the most comprehensive and insatiable. "The eye, says *Solomon*, is not satisfied with seeing." It never surfeits. It could presently run over and survey the beauties of one world, and be ready to travel to another. The more it takes in, the greater is its capacity to take in. In a word, it is the only sense, to which gratification procures an appetite. It is, therefore, most judiciously

judiciously chosen to communicate to our minds an idea of our future enjoyment of God. God, is a good of that infinite, and therefore inexhaustible fullness, as to satisfy the warmest wishes and the most comprehensive desires of the soul. He only can supply the wants of an immortal appetite. From him, as our covenant God and father, there will flow in such a torrent of delight upon all our apprehensive faculties, that the soul will be even overcome, and, as it were, lost in the blissful enjoyment. As when a vessel is thrown into a river, the river first fills it, and then swallows it up. This is that ineffable and everlasting happiness which is provided for the faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

MISCELLANEOUS PARAGRAPHS.

God gave to *Saul* a rich booty upon his conquest of *Amalek*, to try whether he would prefer real obedience to pretended sacrifice, and performing a command to flying upon the spoil. But his ignorance of the *use*, designed by that successful event, made him give way to his folly and his covetousness, so that the crown faded from his brow, and the sceptre was violently torn from his hand. Oh! what a fearful expression was that, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." This was the effect of his misconstrued and mismanaged success. It is true, he conquered *Amalek*, but he destroyed *himself*.

God

God would have prosperity and every temporal blessing excite that humble and admiring question in the heart, " Lord, what is man, that thou visitest him, or the son of man that thou so regardest him ?" He never sends the beauties of the spring, nor the plenties of harvest to surfeit, but to *serve* the children of men ; and the very fruits of the earth are designed as arguments to excite our attention, and raise our thoughts to heaven.

God gives men prosperity to render them *helpful* to society. No man holds the abundance of wealth, place or power, with which heaven has blessed him, as a *proprietor*, but as a *steward* ; as the trustee of providence, to use the blessings of this world for the good of those with whom he converses. God bids a great person rise and shine, as he commands the sun to shed his glorious beams ; not for *himself*, but for the comfort and benefit of mankind. That man is, doubtless, the most honourable, who is the most useful in the world.

JESUS CHRIST having finished his painful task of suffering upon earth : and having triumphantly entered the kingdom, and sat down on the right-hand of the Majesty on High ; his glorious employment has been, and continues to be, as a *king* to make good, what as a *prophet* he had foretold. And the punctuality with which his predictions and his promises are fulfilled, is a certain demonstration of the authenticity of his doctrine, and the divinity of his person.

A man

A man by delight and fancy, may grasp in the sins of all countries, and of every age, and by his inward affection to them, communicate in their *guilt*. He may take a range all the world over, and draw in all that wide circumference of sin and vice, and centre it in his own breast. The sin which a man loves and would commit if he could, most assuredly leaves a stain, and a degree of guilt upon his conscience. Many evil deeds, and vile abominations take place in the imagination, fancy, and affections, which are never, for want of a convenient opportunity, actually perpetrated.

Some companions, and the ways of living in some families are such, that, considering the frailty of corrupt nature, a man might as well expect to come dry out of a river, as to come away from them unpolluted. Let a man accustom himself to frequent converse with the intemperate, the lewd, and the profane, and he will soon find himself contaminated, do whatever he can to preserve himself. The very breath of polluted persons is infectious. Many have been drawn eventually to things unlawful, by going to the *utmost* length in things lawful. The difference between lawful and unlawful is so *very nice*, that it is often hard to say where lawful ends and unlawful begins.

It is highly dangerous for a man to trust his own heart. It will sometimes whisper to him, and reason with him after this way and manner. “What *harm* is there in such and such pleasures and recreations? Many genteel people resort to such and such places, and pursue such and such amusements, and why may not I?” Now this very reasoning of his heart is a

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shrewd sign, that those things are like to prove pernicious to him ; and I shall venture to lay down this as a certain rule, namely that though such and such an action or recreation be really *lawful* in itself, yet if a man engages in it merely for his *own pleasure* (as I believe most do) it is ten to one but it becomes a *snare* to him, and he will come away with a mind and conscience stained and injured. Let a man's heart say what it will, I am sure the Spirit of God, in all such cases, recommends to every pious person, *caution, diffidence, and suspicion*. To secure himself, by keeping out of harms-way. He that escapes a danger is *fortunate*, but he who comes not near it is *wise*.

The favour of relations, patrons, and princes, is variable and uncertain ; and the friendship which they shew upon account of worth and merit, they as often withdraw from caprice and humour : But the *friendship of Jesus Christ* has none of these weaknesses ; no such hollowness or unsoundness is in him. For “ neither principalities nor powers, things present, nor things to come ;” no, nor all the rage and malice of hell, shall be able to pluck the meanest of Christ's friends out of his bosom : for whom “ he loves, he loves to the end.”

No duty or work within the compass of human ability, is sufficient to expiate and take away the guilt of sin. In this matter we must put our hands upon our mouths and be silent for ever. He who imagines it is in his own power and really attempts to *satisfy* the justice of God, does but incense that justice against himself ; and by a foolish endeavour to remove his guilt, does but aggravate it. His works of *satisfaction*

faction for sin, are, though specious in themselves, his greatest sins, and stand most in need of the Redeemer's atonement.

Jesus Christ well knew what it was to be tempted; he sustained the fiery arrows with a fortitude equal to himself: therefore he treats such as are tempted, with all the sympathizing tenderness that fellowship in suffering can produce in a mind infinitely merciful. Hence the words of the apostle, Heb. ii. 18. "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour those also, who are tempted." To which we may add those words, Heb. vii. 25, "He liveth for ever to make intercession for us." And from both together, we have all that comfort, which a boundless compassion, supported by an infinite power, and an endless duration, can afford. Oh! then what an unspeakable advantage do we derive from having such an "High priest, as can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." From such an hand, poor trembling penitent, you may expect not only a sound but a *gentle* cure: A cure in which the tenderest compassion, united to the greatest skill, will certainly make one ingredient in every application.

The pleasures of holy meditation upon the great things of God, have sometimes been so great, and have so engrossed all the powers of the soul, as to leave no room, no possibility for carnal and inferior pleasure. When contemplation is thus engaged it feels no hunger, it knows no thirst, but after the knowledge of our God and Saviour. How far short of this are the pleasures of the epicure? How disproportionate are the delights of the *eating* and of the *thinking*

man? As different as the silence of an ARCHIMEDES in his study, and the stillness of a sow at her wash. Nothing is comparable to the pleasures of an active mind, when, under the teaching-influence of the Spirit; it is intent upon divine things, fully engaged in the great concerns of God, of heaven, and eternity! Penetrating and prevailing *thought* refreshes and invigorates the soul with new discoveries of redeeming love, and the images of divine things; thereby extending the bounds of apprehension, and, as it were, enlarging the territories of reason.

Religion carries the soul to the grandest elevation of thought, and engages it in the contemplation of every attribute and divine perfection of Jehovah. The mind is overwhelmed with the thought of that amazing power which is able to produce such an astonishing fabrick as the universe, and that from vanity and nothing, and which is sufficient, in one moment of time, to throw it back into the abyfs of darkness, and to bury it in perpetual oblivion! Religion, by exciting intense thought, drowns the human mind in the vast speculation of the divine *omniscience*. An attribute which maintains a steady infallible comprehension of all events, in themselves contingent and accidental; and certainly knows that which, as yet, has no existence. The *omnipresence* and *eternity* of the blessed God must non-plus the utmost stretch of human thought. His *Justice* likewise, which will certainly prey upon the guilty impenitent sinner, while his power will uphold that sinner in everlasting existence. But *mercy*, triumphant mercy, will engage the wondering mind through all the countless ages of eternity.

Religion will lead the mind to contemplate the astonishing works of the great Jehovah. *Creation,*
Redemption

Redemption, Providence, and the Resurrection of the body, will afford matter, and give opportunity for the utmost exercise of our reasoning powers. We may add to this, the grandeur of the *beatific vision*: that a created eye should be so fortified as to bear all those glories which necessarily stream from the fountain of uncreated light, is truly wonderful. The pleasure arising from such contemplations as these, cannot easily be expressed. O my soul, how different is this to mere *form* and ceremony! Well might an apostle say, "The kingdom of heaven is not in word only but in power." Such pleasure proves religion a *reality*.

He who prolongs his meals, and sacrifices his time, as well as his other conveniences, to his *luxury*, how quickly does such an one outfit his pleasure? And then, how is all the following time bestowed upon ceremony and surfeit? 'till at length, after a long fatigue of eating, drinking, and babbling, he concludes the great work of dining genteelly, and so makes a shift to rise from table, that he may decline upon his sofa or bed; where, after he has slept himself into some use of himself, by much ado he somehow staggers to his table again, and there repeats his brutal indulgence. Thus the sottish creature dozes away a life that ought to be laid out in active scenes of usefulness, whereby God might be glorified and mankind benefited. How is the *man* lost in this kind of lethargic sinful indulgence. The whole pleasure of the *epicure* dwells on the tip of his tongue. A worthy prize, truly, for a man to purchase with the loss of his time, his reason, and his soul!!!

The man who has arrived to that pitch of infidelity, as to *deny* that there is a devil, gives a shrewd proof that he is deluded by him, and so by accident infers the very thing he would deny. There have indeed been some, in all ages, and among all sects, who have promoted the devil's *interest* by arguing against his *being*. Men wish to go on in sin without control ; and, really it is not more their wish, than the devil accounts it his interest, that so they should go on.

The evident design of the *popish* system is, in the several parts and circumstances of it, to accommodate itself to all the humours and passions of men ; and really I know no argument like *this*, this universal compliance, by which to prove it catholic. Sir *Edwyn Sandys*, in his *Europa Speculum*, pronounces *popery* to be the very master-piece of human contrivance ; for, in the most depraved sense, it can and does become all things to all men. Whether a man be melancholy or licentious, meek or passionate, humble or proud, penitent or impenitent, there is that sufficiency placed in the *opus operatum*, as will not fail (in the judgment of such as can believe it) to answer every desired purpose.

THOMAS resolved to tie his understanding close to his senses : to believe no farther than he could *see*, nor to venture himself but where he could *feel* his way. He would not take a miracle upon hearsay, nor resolve his creed into a mere report : nor, in a word, would he see with any eyes but his own. No, he must trace the print of the nails, follow the spear into the Saviour's side, until he even *touched* the

the miracle, and *felt* the article of the resurrection. However, the blessed and compassionate Saviour, to recover this doubting apostle, condescended to convince him in his own way, but yet so that while he complies with his infirmity, he upbraids and reproofs his infidelity : humouring his *patient*, but not sparing his distemper. And yet all this with so gentle a hand, and such an allay of sweetness, that the reproof is only consequential ; nothing sharp or corrosive dropped from his healing lips. Divine Immanuel ! how tender and effectual are thy reproofs.

Religion, in its true nature, consists of *action* as well as *notion* ; of good works as well as faith ; and you may be sure that man believes to very little purpose whose life is not the better for his belief. Nothing is more usual than for such as venture to displease God, only to gratify men, in the issue to have God for their enemy and man too.—The *drunkard* is, as it were, outlawed from all worthy and creditable converse.—The service of sin is perfect slavery ; and the man who will pay a willing obedience to the commands of it, will find it an unreasonable task-master. The accounts of England run high in the books of heaven, for the religion and truth which God hath planted amongst us : God will one day reckon with us for the church-privileges which we enjoy. Talents buried will have a fearful resurrection.—The scriptures declare that the works of God are past finding out : if so, is it not the height of absurdity to attempt either from divinity or philosophy, to assign any other reason for the works themselves, but the sole will of the great Agent ? Is it not absurd to pretend to ac-

count for that which is declared unaccountable? *Proud* reason must come down.

There are those in the world whom nothing will satisfy, but such a faith as will outvie omnipotence itself, by believing more than omnipotence can do; I mean *contradictions*, and especially that superior one, *Transubstantiation*. *We*, are less aspiring, and can content ourselves with that faith which the apostle tells us can make its way through the whole eleventh chapter of the Hebrews.

Men generally measure the success of an enterprise before-hand, and that according to the preparations made for it, and the power engaged in it. It is an infallible rule of judgment with the world, that ten thousand must needs chase a thousand; and a thousand put an hundred to flight. Every one foresees victory on the strongest side, and foretells it with certainty. But, according to this way of reckoning, how often are men deceived, and in the issue confounded? When we have raised armies, and manned our fleets, are we not still in the hand of providence? In that very hand which has often set the crown upon the head of the *weak* and the *few*, and disappointed the hopes of the numerous and the confident. Judging in this way, *Xerxes* might well be confident, when he came to fetter the Hellespont, and to swallow up the *Athenians*. Upon the same principle the Spanish *Armada* might well boast: but ah! what was the issue? What a poor thing is preparation, if relied upon, opposed to accident? What a pitiful defence is *multitude* on one side, where omninotence takes the other? *If our cause*
be

be just, and God approve our measures, THEN we have every prospect of success.

There are those who are so hardy, or rather profane, as to declare it *enthusiasm*, for a man to assert the divine agency in the matter of salvation. And that, I suppose, because they would account every thing enthusiasm that is not pelagianism. I reply, if these men will but own the doctrine of original sin, and the consequent depravity of human nature, (and they are hardly christians if they do not) I would beg to know by what means, and in what way, human nature can remove the sad effects of the fall? Can any power but that which is divine, effect that change which is become absolutely necessary in order to salvation?

Solomon, the wisest of men, knew no other method by which the practice of virtue might be ensured in a man's declining age, but by planting the seeds thereof in his *youth*. As he who would have his grounds covered with fruit in autumn, must well manure them in the spring. "Train up a child in the way in which it should go, and when he is old he will not depart therefrom."*—Sure in nature there can be nothing more odious to God or the world, than a *wicked old man*!—*Machiavell* (a man not likely to die for love of virtue) affirms repeatedly in his political discourses upon *Livy*, "That where

* N. B. A sinful neglect of *educating children piously*, and training them up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, is one of the prevailing evils of the day. And how professing parents can reconcile this criminal conduct with their holy creed I know not.—*Parents consider it well.*

the manners of a people are generally *corrupted*, there good government cannot subsist." And, I doubt not but the destruction of governments and good order, may be deduced from the general corruption of manners, by a demonstration as certain as any in the mathematicks. — It must be matter of sad reflection to any parent, sooner or later, to think within himself, that he should be instrumental to give his child a *body*, and by his criminal example and vile neglect, eventually damn his *soul*! O let parents, with all imaginable concern of conscience, make it their business to instill the principles of religion and morality in their children's hearts. Endeavour to arrest and engage the first notions of their infant minds. Spare no pains. Think no time lost in training to piety your lovely offspring. Make it a fixed point, as far as human endeavours can go, to prepossess them with the utmost hatred of *sin*. Let them be made to detest it, both name and thing, from the very cradle. Beg of God to bless your exertions on their behalf, and teach their hearts to rise with holy indignation against the very mention of *sin*. Let parents teach their children to abhor *sin* in their *minority*, and the children will be sure to find sufficient reason for that abhorrence when they come to maturity.

It seems, with *Papists*, that a man sometimes cannot be a penitent, unless he also turns a vagabond, and foots it to Jerusalem, or wanders over some part of the world to visit the shrine of some pretended saint, which saint was perhaps ten times more vile and ridiculous than himself. Thus, that which was *Cain's curse* is become *their religion*. He who thinks
to

to expiate a sin by going bare-foot, only makes one folly the atonement for another. *Paul* indeed was scourged and beaten by the Jews, but when did *Paul* beat or scourge himself? And if the Papists think that his *keeping under his body* imports so much, they must first prove, that the body cannot be kept under by a virtuous mind, and that the mind cannot be made virtuous but by a scourge: and consequently that *thongs* and *whipcord* are a sort of means of grace, and things necessary to salvation. The truth is, if men's religion lies no deeper than their skin, it is possible that they may scourge themselves into very considerable improvements.

Men are naturally impatient of controul, and love to direct their own proceedings altogether. But to be left to this self-government is sometimes their greatest misery. By following their own devices they often bring themselves to shame and ruin. No human ability or foresight can clearly determine at all times what will help and what will injure us. If children might have their own will, and be their own choosers, they would certainly choose poison in preference to a cordial, if that were but *sweet*, and this bitter. And so it really is with men themselves in regard to the dealings of God's providence. God can make our most pleasing enjoyments become our bane, and turn our very table into a snare. And, on the other hand, he can make us gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles, and reap comfort and advantage from the most painful affliction. God's infinite wisdom warrants all his actions to be good, and eventually best.

Let

Let the sons of affliction consider the methods of God's providence in his dealings with eminent saints of old, and he may observe how wonderfully God has made those afflictions turn to the advantage of those very persons. So that they have had reason, abundant reason, to be *thankful* for their afflictions. This consideration may administer comfort and support to the tried soul. In things of this nature, examples are the best arguments, and precedents the strongest persuasives. "You have heard of the patience of *Job*, and have seen the end of the Lord," in his particular and important trials. All ended well.

How uncertain a thing is popular applause! it is weak and absurd to court it. If a man *succeeds* in any attempt, though undertook with the utmost rashness and folly: his success shall vouch him, in the opinion of mankind, a consummate politician. Do but give a man good success, and he shall be thought a wise man, in spite of his heart, nay and of his head too. And, on the other hand, be a design laid with the utmost prudence, and deliberately formed by foresight itself, if the plan happens to be *defeated*, the man is then run down by an universal outcry: his counsels are derided, his prudence called in question, and his person is despised. So much for popular opinion—O then, "cease, my soul, from *man*, whose breath is in his nostrils."

Meekness and patience well become the christian. Moses and Jesus Christ were eminent for both. They were of too great a mind to *do* any violence, but not too great, *i. e.* in other words, not too *proud* to *suffer*. Both of them discover their magnanimity in this, that
being

being reviled they reviled not again. The royal diadem never sat so gloriously, or shone with equal splendor on any prince's brow, as did the crown of *thorns* upon the brow of the Saviour. The *manner* in which Christ suffered demands our admiration! You see a series of accumulated woes, but you hear not a murmuring word. The achievements of *passive* valor, are more glorious than those of *active* courage. There is an inclination in nature pushing the man forward to action, but nothing to dispose it to *suffer*; this nature abhors. However, in favour of *passive* fortitude, let it be remembered that *it was SUFFERING which redeemed the world.*

The fallen state of man, and his reigning impurities, have created such a contrariety to the blessed God, that in his present circumstances there can be no *communion*. It is *guilt* which makes the soul look upon God as an enemy; as clothed with terror, and as a *consuming fire*, and upon itself as *fit fuel*, upon which that fire will prey for evermore. The divine *holiness* is infinitely amiable in itself, but yet a dreadful and confounding sight to a guilty sinner. As the *light* itself, though it be the glory of the creation and the joy of the universe, is yet abhorred by *thieves* and *robbers*. Heaven is exhibited to us as the mansion of happiness and pleasure, but it is so only to the soul which is *prepared* for it, and by the special renovation of its qualities, made congenial to the state. But to a soul under the *power and guilt of sin*, heaven can no more prove a delight, than the serenest and most wholesome air can prove so to a *fish*, which must unavoidably *perish* in the element which preserves its proper inhabitants.

When

When a man is possessed of real *poverty of spirit*, he becomes thoroughly sensible of his deplorable condition by nature as a fallen creature. The dignity of human nature is a doctrine not easily credited by him, and from which he turns with aversion, as it positively contradicts the man's *experience*. In this, as in most cases, experience is the best teacher. The man feels that he is in a bad condition, and is unable to recover himself from it. He finds his understanding much darkened, so that he cannot perceive and understand *the things of God*, and that his will is averse and disinclined to choose those things. Thus he is made acquainted with himself, and that he certainly must be renewed in the spirit of his mind, and born of God, if ever he be fit for heaven.

The conceptions we have of God are very deficient; and, circumstanced as we are, it cannot be otherwise: for we are obliged to understand that which is *infinite* after a finite manner. Philosophy teaches that *intelligere est pati, et pati est recipere*. And one thing receives another not according to the full latitude of the object, but according to its own scanty capacity. If we let down a vessel into the sea, we shall bring up, not what the *sea can afford*, but what the *vessel can contain*. Thus it is as to our understanding of the great God.

The carnal hypocrite esteems every fit of sorrow for sin, to be *repentance*; and here he rests, thinking his sorrow to have atoned for his sin, and his tears to have washed away his impunities. Not considering the vast difference there is between μέλαμελεσθαι and μέλανοεῖν; between a bare regret, and a sorrow arising

arising from natural causes, and such a sorrow and compunction of heart, as is attended with a total change of the inward man. While the former is the mere production of nature, the latter is the special work of the Holy Spirit.

Death is on his way, and when he comes he will divide between the hypocrite and the true believer. The hope of the latter will be crowned, and the hope of the former will be confounded. A line of eternal separation will then be drawn between the righteous and the wicked. The hypocrite must then let go his hold, bid an everlasting farewell to all his comforts, and renounce his usurped confidence, and take up his portion in those mansions of endless despair, where he shall have abundant cause to *wish*, but no grounds to *hope*, for redemption.

A state of grace, is that, which the scripture in other words calls *spiritual life*, it does by consequence imply two things, first the principle of this life which is *faith*. The second is the exercise of this principle which is call'd *gospel-obedience*.

When there is a general depravation and corruption of good manners among the people, government cannot stand; and it is manifest that the integrity of men's manners cannot be secured, where a *true estimate* of vice and virtue is not preserved in the mind. Vice must be looked upon as shameful and abominable, that is *all* vice without exception; and *virtue* esteemed as worthy and honourable. Where *morality* falls to the ground, government must soon follow. How shall wholesome and good laws be able to subsist in a land
where

where the violation of them is become *fashionable*, and therefore (with the world) creditable. This is certain, there can be no fence against *vice*, when it has got into reputation. In this case, it rushes in upon society like a torrent, with a furious storm to drive it forward; and then *virtue* must either swim against wind and tide, or sink and be swallowed up in the prevailing stream of a contrary practice. Now when iniquity thus prevails in a land, God is pleased to lay hold of the rod, and assert his own right as governour of the world, and to convince audacious sinners, that where shame of sin *ends*, vengeance for sin *must begin*, or the government of the world cease; and that if men will not *see*, they must be made to *feel* the difference between vice and virtue.

Covetousness is called by the apostle *the root of all evil*, and that with great propriety; there being hardly a vice in nature, but what covetousness will adopt to answer its own ends. Various illegal methods have been used to acquire *gain*, by covetous persons. Estates obtained in this way, are often of a short continuance. In most insurrections, murders, and frauds, covetousness commands in chief. None ever acted the traitor and the Judas expertly and to the purpose, but still there was a *quid debitis* behind the curtain. Covetousness has been all along, even in the most base designs, the principal, though hidden spring of motion. *Simony*, however it may seem to get consecrated by *use*, is a fruit of covetousness. And let it be observed and remembered, that covetousness *turns* as naturally to patrons and preferment, as some obsequious flowers turn to the sun. In short, the covetous person puts on all forms and shapes, runs through all trades and professions, haunts all places,

places, and makes himself expert in the mystery of all vices, that he may the better pay his devotions to his god *mammon*.

Poverty, in regard to worldly substance, is very often the natural consequence of *sin*. It was the vices of the *prodigal* which reduced his circumstances. The drunkard drinks off his estate, as he does his cups, to the very bottom. The vain-glorious man wears his fortune upon his back, till at length he wears it out. The contentious man pursues the law against his neighbour, in mere revenge, till the very obtaining of the *cause*, cannot defray the *charges*, or remove the *poverty* contracted by the *prosecution*. We sometimes look, perhaps with more deserved contempt than pity, upon a reduced and wretched character, and say, "That man was once worth considerable, but like a fool he gambled and drank it all away!" *Reader, is there not such a man in your neighbourhood? O learn a lesson of instruction from his sad example.*

The aggregate amount of christian duties may be reduced to these three things, *faith*, *obedience* and *patience*. And the vital principle which animates them all is, *submission*. *Faith* is a submission to the oracles of God; *obedience* is a submission to the commanding will of God; *patience* is a submission to the chastisements of God.

One argument for an humble submission to the will of God in circumstances of adversity, is, his absolute dominion and sovereignty over all things. This differs from his power, as much as *ἐξουσία* differs from *δυναμις*, *authority* and *strength*. Between a mere
N abilit

ability to act, and a right to act. There may be often one without the other. Power without authority, and authority without power. Now the dominion of God is founded upon the best, the greatest, and the most undeniable title; which is that of creation and providence. It being highly reasonable, that the *first cause*, should on that very account be the *supreme Governor*, and whatsoever has been made and preserved by God, should be also commanded and controuled by him. It therefore well becomes us to say; at all times and upon all occasions, "The will of the Lord be done."

The man that falls in a *duel* dies a *criminal*; and, it is to be feared that the steel penetrates deeper into his soul than his body, and kills much farther than it reaches. Death eternal follows the fatal thrust! When two persons enter the field as *duellists*, they defy one another; they defy the laws of God, and they defy hell itself; their business is, which shall send the other to that place of misery first. For, it is certain, that whoever quits the body with marks of murder and revenge fresh upon his soul, and passes from his conquering enemy, to his dreadful judge, shall in that world be condemned for a murderer, though it was his ill-hap to be murdered in this.

Solomon says that "fools make a mock at sin." *Fools* they are indeed for doing so. But is it possible, for any thing that wears the name of *reason* to be so much a fool, as to make a mock of *death* too? Will a man play with *hell*, dally with a *scorpion*, and sport himself with everlasting *burnings*? In every sin which a man deliberately commits, he therein takes down a
drought

drought of deadly poison. In every lust which he cherishes, he embraces a *dagger*, and opens his bosom to *destruction*.

That any one should find peace in a state of sin and licentiousness is almost incredible. But where a man is *ignorant* of the curse due to sin, no wonder that he seems to be at peace. But there are some fool-hardy men who have heard the curse, yet persevere in their sins regardless of it, and because they have not yet felt its weight, think nothing of bearing it; but when once it is brought nigh, the man's fears start up alarmed, and consternation agitates his soul! We have in king *Belshazzar* a striking illustration of this: proud of his power, and flushed with wine, he (infidel-like) bids defiance to the God of heaven. But when God did but lift up his *finger* against him, how was his countenance changed, his very joints were loosed and his knees smote against one another! Now if the royal sinner felt God's hand so intolerable, when it did but *write* his sentence, what must he feel when the same hand should *execute* it? *

*  The EDITOR has often imagined to himself, what an admirable subject the above must be for an historic painting. Here is the finest opportunity for a rich variety of colouring, a display of human passions, and room for the utmost exercise of genius. Besides this, such a piece must naturally inculcate one of the most important lessons of MORALITY.—The Editor has attempted a DRAWING of the subject in Indian ink, which may be seen at Mr. COLEMAN's, Jeweller, (late of the Strand) now in Leicester-square, and when the first is disposed off, the infant artist, purposes to renew his efforts, so as to improve the subject, and keep one ready to exhibit. The drawing is nearly stained upon canvas, measuring 26 inches by 20.—Price 2l. 12s. 6d.

Inscribed to the shade of a certain priest, who determined to imitate Jesus Christ in fasting forty days, but died on the 14th.

We know the body is subservient to the uses of the soul. But Christ never destroys one to save the other; nor bids any one *put the knife to his throat*, so as to kill himself. We must distinguish between murder and mortification.—Christ commands no man to be a skeleton, or a walking ghost: no, nor to throw away his health, in order to his salvation. A catarrh, or a consumption, is no man's duty. *Self-denial* may be a duty; but, I am sure, *self-murder* is a sin.

For a man to expect to be saved, or to be happy without a knowledge of the revealed will of God, in things necessary to salvation, is as great an absurdity, as for a man to expect to see without eyes. And, therefore, in these important matters, he who increases ignorance, increases the means of his damnation; he increases the shadow of death, adds darkness to darkness, and passes by the glooms of ignorance to the regions of hell,

How uncertain is life, and how sure is death! How many young gentlemen enter upon the practice of *physic* and *law*, with ardent hopes they may cut a figure in the world, but ere they have made any considerable proficiency, have been cut off by the hand of *death*! Look abroad in the world: do not many loose their own health, while they are learning to restore it to others? Do not many shorten their days, and contract incurable diseases, in the midst of *Galen* and *Hippocrates*?

Hippocrates? Get consumptions amongst receipts and medicines, and even die while they are conversing with remedies!—Then for the *law*: are not many called to the grave, while they are preparing for a call to the bar? Do they not grapple with knots and intricacies, perhaps not so soon dissolved as themselves? Do not their bodies wither and decay, and after a long study of the law, look like an estate that has passed through a long *suit at law*?

To make invectives against sin and the world, and to speak satyrs against the devil, will never demonstrate a man to be indeed a disciple of Jesus Christ. Many do thus, who are the willing servants of sin and satan. Shew me the man who can *act* against sin as vigorously as he speaks; who can trample his lust under foot, and as it were crucify himself for the sake of Christ, and I will shew you a true disciple. Such a man demonstrates to all the world that Jesus Christ reigns supreme in his heart. *Reader, does he thus reign in yours?*

Men may *now* trifle with the great concerns of religion and of their souls, but the time will come when they can trifle no longer. If they are not brought to acquiesce in, and to love the religion of the gospel, their circumstances will soon be deplorable indeed! Providence and death will soon bereave them of all which they now hold dear. The present delight of their eyes, and joy of their hearts, will soon be no more for ever. And when these fail, where will the sinner find a refuge? Many a proud pharisee, many a careless professor, now pretends love to God, and esteem for Jesus Christ, but God knows

how soon all these pretences may be brought to the severest trial. It is in the moments of affliction and death, that men begin to feel the want of those inward supports which nothing but the religion of Christ can administer. Now the soul is beat off from all its former holds, now it is bereft of every supply, and every thing on this side eternity seems to frown and to inspire terror. In such moments it has been found that *religion* is not a chimera, and that the true believer, the disciple of the Lord Jesus, has a principle within him, which makes him hold up his head, in those circumstances in which others sink in despair. *

One principle evidence of a sincere love to Jesus Christ is a zeal for his honour; which will discover itself in a great variety of ways. The good man is impatient to see or hear an indignity offered to the Saviour; and is ready to render every assistance in his power to promote his interest in the world. A pious soul will mourn as well for other men's sins as for his own. "Mine eyes ran down with tears, says holy David, because men keep not thy commandments." He is grieved because God is dishonoured. The vicious lives of others cannot wound his conscience, but yet they distress his heart. The honour of religion becomes his personal concern, and when religion is wounded, he feels the injury; and that professor is an *unfeeling wretch*, with whom it is otherwise. When a zealous disciple of Jesus hears the name of God profaned, religion scoffed at and

* The *Obituary*, in the Evangelical Magazine, is a fine elucidation of Dr. South's remark above.

abused,

abused, his blood boils, his heart grows hot within him, and he cannot but vindicate the honour of his Maker, in reproving the blasphemer to his face. — Never did our Saviour express so strong an indignation, as when he saw men profaning the *temple*, and turning his Father's house into a house of merchandise and a den of thieves. He then added compulsion to complaint, and drove out those hucksters in the face of danger, and in spite of resistance.

Papists pretend that it is from their *humility* that they will not come directly to Jesus Christ, but by the intervention or mediation of his friends, *i. e.* angels and saints. To this I reply, that Christ, who knew better than *we* know, has commanded us *to come*. In which case we are to learn that the best and most refined humility is *obedience*. And, if in direct opposition to his express command, *Come unto ME*, we do go to *others*, it is the *sacrifice of fools*; a sacrifice seasoned with ignorance and obstinacy. It is not so properly a veneration of his majesty as a despising of his mercy.—As gold upon gold is absurd in *heraldry*, so I am sure, a mediator to a mediator is still more absurd in *christianity*. I conclude, therefore, that Christ is the only person, through whose mediation we may with confidence make our petition and find access to God. Christ is the only true way, the way that has *light* to direct, and *life* to reward those who walk in it; and consequently there is no coming to the Father but BY HIM.

One method by which the Holy Spirit comforts a believer, is, by discovering to him that grace which is within him. That is, not only by clearing up to his

mind the love of God *to him*, but by making him to see *his* love to God. Now the strength of this, as it is an argument of comfort to the believer, lies in this, namely, that our love to God is the proper *effect*, and therefore the infallible sign of God's love *to us*, which is the basis of all our comfort, and the fountain of all our bliss. We therefore love because we were first loved. But the *sinner* gives no evidence of love to God: continued resistance of the Spirit is totally inconsistent with grace. Can any one fight like an enemy and love like a friend? Impossible! *Sinner*, you must stand self-convicted and self-condemned.

Christians do well to remember, for their own comfort, that "The Lord reigns, though the earth be never so unquiet." When the devil tempted and tried holy *Job*, he could not go beyond the line which the Almighty prescribed him. He is an enemy doubtless, but then he is an enemy in chains. As to him, satan, and wicked men, who are his agents, they are all under the control of *your best friend*, believer. All the miseries you so much fear, are entirely at God's disposal. He holds the stars, the seas, and the hearts of men in his own hand. All the grandees of the world are only the sword-bearers of the *great King*. Now it would be highly absurd in us to conclude, that because they *bear* the sword they have a right or power to use it independent of God—They have not. Should not this allay your fears, and compose your hearts to rest? Consider believers, that your greatest enemies can do no more than your best friend permits! A child is no more afraid when he sees a *sword*, than when he sees a staff in his *father's* hand. Be it a mercy or be it a judgment, why should we be anxiously troubled

troubled about it ; the whole is under the management of our heavenly Father. It afforded pious *David* the highest satisfaction, that " his times were in the hands of God," Psa. xxxi. All his concerns, whether in prosperity or in adversity : his persecution from house and home, as well as his advancement to the kingdom, were all regulated by the wise appointment, and adjusted by the sovereign providence of God. In circumstances of affliction, "*Thou* didst it (says *David*) therefore I kept silence." It is an argument sufficient, not only to silence our murmurings, but our complaints ; not only to convince our reason, but to confute our fears ; *it is God that does it*. He says to this affliction, go and it goes ; to this enemy, persecute and he persecutes ; to another kill, and he kills. All things attend the nod and the control of his sovereign will and pleasure. This, therefore, is an argument of solid comfort, that in all the miseries which befall us, still God, our God, is the great agent. In the severest torments we must not complain while we are under the hand of the surgeon, and that surgeon is *our father*.

It is wrong, and argues a considerable want of christian fortitude, to be discouraged from the discharge of our duty in any way whatever. Shall the frowns of a poor weak *man* terrify us more than the displeasure of the great *God* ? Is a prison more terrible than the lake of fire ? Is a day's sorrow more terrible than eternal misery ? O how many duties have been neglected, how many evils have been committed, through a sinful *fear of man* ! Is not the following the common language of many hearts, " If I should perform such a strict duty, I should be derided. If I should bear my testimony to such a truth, I should offend

offend such and such an one. If I should testify to such an one's face of the vanity of his conversation, and the profaneness and frothiness of his discourse, I should disoblige him for ever: I dare not do it." Dare not do it? then let such an one renounce his christianity, and still more the ministry, if he is engaged in it. For such a temper is a disgrace to both.

The sharpest, the most afflicting, and at the same time, the most interesting part of a christian's duty, is the *mortification* of sin. It is as it were, a man's weeding not his garden but his *heart*, and heart-work is always hard work. He will find innate corruption a growing evil; an evil, which, by a cursed fertility, will sprout out after cutting. Scarce any weed is fetched up at once; the gardener's hand and hook must be continually at the work, and he accounts his ground preserved if it is not over-run.

NB. If the reader would see this subject more fully discussed, let him consult the excellent Dr. Owen upon In-dwelling Sin and the Mortification of Sin in Believers.

In regard to the commission of many sins, men are apt to say (*i. e.* secretly in their hearts) that such and such a thing is no great matter; and therefore, surely they need not scruple doing what they so much desire. But such men should consider, that this kind of reasoning argues and demonstrates that they entertain very diminutive thoughts of the evil there is in sin, and that they wish to take every advantage to commit it. Now, I am confident, there cannot be a greater proof of a corrupt, rotten, and un sanctified heart. When a man endeavours to excuse and extenuate the guilt of what he calls a small sin, by charging it upon surprise, passion, weakness, company, or the like;

like; it is an abuse of terms to call that an *infirmity*; for when once a man comes to excuse and defend his sin, it proves that a man loves it, though he hates the fearful consequence of it. Such a temper of mind, in regard to sin, is as offensive in the sight of God, as any actual crime, the guilty sons of men can perpetrate!

After all the fair appearances of piety and integrity among men, God will judge them according to their hearts. In Ezek. xiv. we have men addressing themselves to God in the greatest shew of religion imaginable. However God declares that he will not answer them according to those pretences, but according to the *idols* they had set up in their hearts. Many a man will, for worldly interest, conform to any thing, and cast himself into any mould, and be very different in appearance to what he is in reality: his words and conduct shall bear no correspondence with the inward frame of his mind. The transactions *within*, are what the God of heaven regards with a jealous eye. The *covetous* man, in his mind, can lay up heap upon heap, and what he cannot obtain by his endeavours, he will make up by his thoughts. The *ambitious* man will think over all the commendations of fame, and in the closet of his mind erect the idol of his own excellencies, and fall down and worship it. The *vengeful* person, in his mind, will trample his offending brother in the dust, and stab him to the heart. The *lascivious* wretch, in his mind, will feed his corrupt fancy with ten-thousand foolish forms, to the defilement of his soul. Here, in the concealments of the mind, the genius of nature, corrupt and fallen nature, acts freely: But God knows all these silent workings of the heart. The
christian

christian must keep up a perpetual conflict with them, give them no indulgence, no quarter, but go from conquering to conquer, till victory be obtained by faith in Christ.

In heaven, the blessed regions of light and immortality, God will discover himself to the soul without the intervention of *means* such as we are conversant with here. He will discover himself so plainly, and manifest his divine perfections so clearly to the enlightened mind, that we shall know him as fully and clearly as we do those things which are actually before our eyes.

How will all the present scenes *change* in another world? The epicure shall pass from his bed of roses, to a bed of flames! And the poor distressed and tried saint, shall be translated from his prison and his oppressors, into joys which are unspeakable and glorious, which cannot be described. Be not discouraged, poor wearied pilgrim, hold on thy way, there awaits thee a crown of righteousness: and what thou must be immortalized to bear, AN ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY.

BY PARTICULAR DESIRE,

THE HEADS OF A DISCOURSE,

*Preached at Halifax and at Heckmondwike, in
July 1795, is here inserted.*

Text.—Cant. ii. 2.

AS THE APPLE TREE AMONG THE TREES OF THE WOOD,
SO IS MY BELOVED AMONG THE SONS. I SAT DOWN
UNDER HIS SHADOW WITH GREAT DELIGHT, AND
HIS FRUIT WAS SWEET TO MY TASTE.

These words are the figurative and expressive language of the church respecting her illustrious head, the Lord Jesus. *The apple tree*, denotes his excellence and superiority; see chap. v. 10, 16. To contemplate the subject at large, we might consider, First, The *root* of this tree, viz. the everlasting love and all-wise purposes of God. Had there been no such love, there would have been no such tree. Secondly, The several *branches*; i. e. justification, adoption, sanctification, &c. &c. Thirdly, The rich clusters of *fruit* which adorn these branches, namely, pardon, peace, joy, and a hope full of immortality. Fourthly, Its majestic *height*; its top reaches to heaven, John iii. 13. Fifthly, Its abiding *verdure*; it is ever green and ever bearing.

I sat, sitting is a posture which denotes ease and contentment; both which are derived from the Lord Jesus. *Under his shadow*, denotes *nearness* to Christ; see Isa. xxv. 4. Ps. xci. 1. *With great delight*—Nearness to, and communion with Christ, consti-

tutes

tutes a heaven upon earth ; no enjoyment is equal to it. *His fruit was sweet, &c.* The fruit of this tree is wonderful in its properties ; it *satisfies* the hungry—it *refreshes* the weary—it *heals* the wounded—it *strengthens* the weak—it *animates* the fearful. The fruit of this tree is always *pleasant*, always *wholesome*, and always *ripe*.

REMARKS. No one can be truly happy without Christ : He is both the source and the centre of true happiness. The *blind* never saw this tree ; therefore they never prize it. Christ, and all the glories of his person ; Christ, and all the blessings of his salvation, is no way engaging to the carnal mind. *Infidels* have tried to fell this tree : they have laboured long and hard. No stroke has ever yet injured it ; still it remains the same : it is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. This tree has been *famous* all the world over, for its engaging beauty and superior worth. Such as eat of this tree, *live for ever* ; see John vi. 5. Satan, that infernal enemy to the human race, presents a thousand different temptations to draw the attention, especially of *young people*, from this tree. My dear young friends, stand upon your guard, keep *near* this tree, sit down under its shadow, eat plentifully of its fruit, it is perfectly free for you. In this way you will enjoy a *delight*, which the world, with all its boasted charms, can never yield. A stranger to Christ cannot conceive the happiness which is derived from him by a lively faith. “ Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, what God hath prepared in Christ for them that love him ; but he hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.”

THE BEAUTIES OF SOUTH

Have met with the countenance and encouragement of the following reverend and respectable Gentlemen and others, to whom the Editor returns his most grateful acknowledgments for their favours.

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